THE Nation.

CUT THE MILITARY BUDGET!
Barney Frank

THOSE PESKY BLUE DOGS
Christopher Hayes

PAY-CAP POPULISM
Sarah Anderson & Sam Pizzigati

KAFKA: THE MISSING PERSON
Alexander Provan

MARCH 2, 2009
www.thenation.com

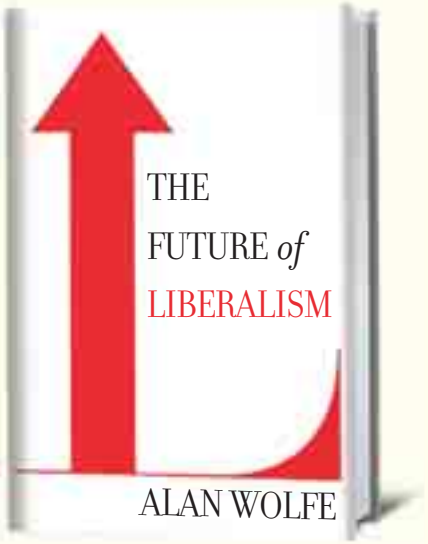
THE MAN WHO WANTS TO LOOT SOCIAL SECURITY

PETE PETERSON AND THE DC ESTABLISHMENT'S POWER PLAY

WILLIAM GREIDER

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

A compelling and deeply felt exploration and defense of
LIBERALISM



"A fine defense of liberal values
. . . No one with an open mind, can come away from the book treating 'liberal' as a term of abuse." —*The Economist*

"A small masterpiece of political thought"
—MICHAEL KAZIN, author of *A Godly Hero: The Life of William Jennings Bryan*

"Wolfe restores luster to the original ideals of liberty and equality but also shows liberalism's pragmatic side." —MARK LILLA, author of *A Stillborn God*

KNOPF aaknopf.com

Exchange

'Standing on the Shoulders of Giants'

Our readers were profoundly moved by John Mavroudis's February 2 Obama inauguration cover and wrote in large numbers to tell us so. Nation *readers, always vigilant, let us know where we erred: Obama is facing the wrong way; we forgot to include _____(fill in the blank); we should not have included (a) Gandhi, (b) Thoreau or (c) _____(fill in the blank); the key was hard to read (we're sorry; we've reprinted it on page 24). We are pleased to announce that in response to your many requests, the cover will soon be available as a poster. Stay tuned. —The Editors*

WASHINGTON, D.C.
I had just made it home after witnessing Barack Obama's swearing-in and standing for hours on the National Mall in the frigid air, when I opened my mailbox and laid eyes on John Mavroudis's cover of your February 2 issue. The image was so moving, I stood weeping in the hallway of my apartment building. I just imagined all those brave Americans who dared to strive for the milestone our country reached on January 20.
GRANT SMITH

SAUGERTIES, N.Y.
An infinitude of kudos to John Mavroudis for creating the best *Nation* cover ever. He beautifully captured what I and very likely so many others were imagining throughout the inauguration ceremonies: that the throngs packing the capital were dwarfed by an invisible contingent of all the people who'd devoted their lives—from the bad old days of the transatlantic slave trade right on up through the civil rights struggles of the '60s and beyond—to making this moment possible. They knew this day would come; thanks to Mavroudis, they got to witness it with the rest of us.
MIKHAIL HOROWITZ

BURBANK, CALIF.
If there is a more succinct illustration of that old adage about a picture and a kilo of words, I don't know what it would be. From the story of an idea and the country founded upon that idea, to the individual stories of the men and women who embraced that idea and advanced it inexorably toward this moment, to the depiction of President Obama's declaration that being an American transcends race, gender, culture and language, this cover is a triumph of artistic and editorial sensibilities. It underscores another well-known observation, that history is made by ordinary people doing extraordinary things to change circumstances for themselves and for us all. Well done!
MELINA PRICE

HARTFORD, WISC.
Your February 2 cover is the most moving and inspirational I can remember in the many years I have been a reader. A framed copy might help President Obama remember that, as amazing an accomplishment as his election was, there were others who came before to prepare the way. One could appropriately talk of standing on the shoulders of giants. (And thanks for giving Jackie Robinson the right number in your key.)
ROBERT MCDERMOTT

CHICAGO
What a lovely cover by Mavroudis, with Obama being sworn in by Thurgood Marshall (who would certainly have gotten the oath of office letter-perfect). So many people brought babies to the inauguration to photograph them there, to make the great day part of family lore, to be able one day to say, "Yes, baby, you were there." I hope you will produce this cover as a poster for homes and classrooms. It's a keeper.
SUSAN KLONSKY

HIGHLAND PARK, N.J.
I must truly say, save for the omissions of freedom fighters Fannie Lou Hamer and Ella Baker, your inauguration cover was absolutely soul-stirring! The knowledge of the profound sacrifices made by our ancestors, old and young, in their quest for a more perfect Union, a more perfect America, brings tears to my eyes and reminds me daily of the great re-

letters@thenation.com

(continued on page 24)

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The Nation.
since 1865

Bankrupt Bailout

Let us hope President Obama has asked his economic advisers if they have a Plan B—because Plan A failed as soon as Treasury Secretary Tim Geithner announced the details.

EDITORIAL

Geithner's speech was supposed to be a fresh start for restoring investor confidence and directing capital to deeply injured banks. Instead, it was a rhetorical catastrophe for the Obama administration. As Geithner spoke, financial markets plummeted; the Dow Jones slid nearly 400 points. Markets aren't always a trustworthy measure of policy, but in this case the skepticism was justified. Treasury's so-called "financial stability" plan is a warmed-over mishmash that answers none of the crucial questions about how to resolve the crisis, and it leaves out virtually every meaningful fact. When public officials are that evasive, it usually means they don't know what they're doing—or, more likely, they are trying to fog over their true intentions.

What are they hiding? If Geithner had spoken with any clarity, he would have revealed that his "new" plan is basically a continuation of the one that failed spectacularly in the closing months of the Bush administration: Washington intends to deliver vast additional sums of public money to the very largest banks while demanding little in return for the public interest. The Obama administration is adding new wrinkles to a doomed effort, attempting to put Humpty Dumpty back together again. Since the old order led the country into this mess, enlarging its rescue package is certain to stoke further the ferocious public outrage. So Geithner cannot say plainly what he is up to. Neither he nor Larry Summers, Obama's chief economic adviser, can think his way out of the problem or propose a more aggressive approach, as both men are wedded to the old way of doing things.

The predicament is now deeply threatening to our new president; very swiftly he will own the disaster he inherited. We urge Obama to launch an entirely different approach. The fundamental, terrifying fact of this crisis, widely understood among experts and cautious investors, is that many of our largest financial institutions are insolvent. It is not in the public interest to exhaust the Treasury trying to keep them alive.

The more promising path is for government to take charge of the system. This approach—call it "supervised workouts" if "nationalization" sounds too scary—would be more efficient than handing over more billions to failed bank executives and asking them to do the right thing. The government should liquidate the troubled big banks (along with the arcane financial instruments that led to their downfall), sell off their parts to healthier enterprises and let the shareholders eat the dust. Scarce public capital can meanwhile be used to fashion a new banking system, built around the thousands of smaller banks and financial firms that respect their obligations to the broader economy by investing in production and jobs. It will take some years to do this, and government will temporarily have to fill in the blank spots in the credit system that are not functioning, but it's probably the only way out.

In some ways, Obama did this to himself. Ignoring the pleas of skeptics and reformers (*The Nation* included), the president surrounded himself with familiar players from the old order and rigorously excluded anyone identified as an unorthodox thinker. It is not too late to correct this deformity, but he can't wait long. The White House needs a healthier mix of ideas and advisers—people who are not committed to saving old Wall Street names but are capable of visualizing a brighter future emerging from the ruins. Look around, Mr. President. You can find them.

Inside

Exchange

2 'Standing on the Shoulders of Giants'
OUR READERS AND JOHN MAVROUDIS

Editorials & Comment

3 Bankrupt Bailout

4 Pay-Cap Populism
SARAH ANDERSON AND SAM PIZZIGATI

5 Noted

6 100 Days
Cut the Military Budget—I
CHRISTOPHER HAYES

7 Cut the Military Budget—II
BARNEY FRANK

8 Obama Backslides on 'State Secrets'
DAVID COLE

Columns

6 Deadline Poet
Lesson Learned
CALVIN TRILLIN

9 Diary of a Mad Law Professor
Eight Is Enough
PATRICIA J. WILLIAMS

10 The Liberal Media
Save the News, Not the Newspaper
ERIC ALTERMAN

Articles

11 The Man Who Wants to Loot Social Security
Pete Peterson and the Washington establishment's power play.
WILLIAM GREIDER

16 Blue Dogs Bark
The caucus of conservative Dems hasn't accomplished much.
CHRISTOPHER HAYES

22 Britain's Winter of Discontent
Is the country too big to fail?
D.D. GUTTENPLAN

Books & the Arts

25 BEGLEY: The Tremendous World I Have Inside My Head: Franz Kafka: A Biographical Essay
CORNGOLD, GREENBERG AND WAGNER, EDS.: Franz Kafka: The Office Writings
KAFKA: Amerika: The Missing Person
HAWES: Why You Should Read Kafka Before You Waste Your Life
ALEXANDER PROVAN

29 BACK TALK: Adam Frank
CHRISTINE SMALLWOOD

30 Four Books on the History of Iran
NEGAR AZIMI

34 The Human Metaphor
BARRY SCHWABSKY

DESIGN BY GENE CASE & STEPHEN KLING/AVENGING ANGELS; ILLUSTRATIONS BY NEIL SHAPIRO, DOUG CHAYKA AND ADRIAN BELLESGUARD

VOLUME 288, NUMBER 8, MARCH 2, 2009
PRINTED FEBRUARY 11

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The Nation.

EDITOR & PUBLISHER: Katrina vanden Heuvel

PRESIDENT: Teresa Stack

MANAGING EDITOR: Roane Carey
LITERARY EDITOR: John Palattella
EXECUTIVE EDITOR: Betsy Reed
SENIOR EDITORS: Richard Lingeman, Richard Kim
WEB EDITOR: Joan Connell
COPY CHIEF: Judith Long
ASSISTANT LITERARY EDITOR: Miriam Markowitz
COPY EDITOR: Mark Sorkin
ASSISTANT COPY EDITOR: Dave Baker
COPY ASSOCIATE: Lisa Vandepaer
ASSISTANT WEB EDITOR: Adam Howard
ASSISTANT TO THE EDITOR: Peggy Suttle
INTERNS: Gabriel Gil Arana, Laura C. Dean (*Washington*), Corbin W. Hiar, Uzma Kolsy, Madeleine Kuhns, Loren A. Lynch, Cassie Metcalf-Slovo, Keith Newell, Elyssa Pachico, Gabriela Resto-Montero

WASHINGTON: EDITOR: Christopher Hayes; **CORRESPONDENT:** John Nichols

NATIONAL AFFAIRS CORRESPONDENT: William Greider

COLUMNISTS: Eric Alterman, Alexander Cockburn, Naomi Klein, Katha Pollitt, Patricia J. Williams, Gary Younge

DEPARTMENTS: *Architecture*, Jane Holtz Kay; *Art*, Arthur C. Danto; *Corporations*, Robert Sherrill; *Defense*, Michael T. Klare; *Environment*, Mark Hertsgaard; *Films*, Stuart Klawans; *Legal Affairs*, David Cole; *Net Movement*, Ari Melber; *Peace and Disarmament*, Jonathan Schell; *Poetry*, Peter Gizzi; *Sex*, JoAnn Wypijewski; *Sports*, Dave Zirin; *United Nations*, Barbara Crossette; *Deadline Poet*, Calvin Trillin

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS: Kai Bird, Robert L. Borosage, Stephen F. Cohen, Marc Cooper, Mike Davis, Slavenka Drakulić, Robert Dreyfuss, Susan Faludi, Thomas Ferguson, Doug Henwood, Max Holland, Michael Moore, Christian Parenti, Richard Pollak, Joel Rogers, Karen Rothmyer, Robert Scheer, Herman Schwartz, Bruce Shapiro, Edward Sorel, Gore Vidal, Jon Wiener, Amy Wilentz, Art Winslow

CONTRIBUTING WRITERS: Ari Berman, Lakshmi Chaudhry, William Deresiewicz, Liza Featherstone, Bob Moser, Eyal Press, Scott Sherman

BUREAUS: *London*, Maria Margaronis and D.D. Guttenplan; *Southern Africa*, Mark Gevisser

EDITORIAL BOARD: Deepak Bhargava, Norman Birnbaum, Barbara Ehrenreich, Richard Falk, Frances FitzGerald, Eric Foner, Philip Green, Lani Guinier, Tom Hayden, Tony Kushner, Elinor Langer, Deborah W. Meier, Toni Morrison, Walter Mosley, Victor Navasky, Pedro Antonio Noguera, Richard Parker, Michael Pertschuk, Elizabeth Pochoda, Marcus G. Raskin, Kristina Rizga, Andrea Batista Schlesinger, David Weir, Roger Wilkins

ASSOCIATE PUBLISHER, SPECIAL PROJECTS/WEBSITE: Peter Rothberg
ASSOCIATE PUBLISHER, DEVELOPMENT/ASSOCIATES: Peggy Randall
VICE PRESIDENT, ADVERTISING: Ellen Bollinger
ADVERTISING MANAGER, SMALL DISPLAY, EVENTS, CLASSIFIED: Amanda Hale
WEB SALES MANAGER: Nancy Wildermuth
VICE PRESIDENT, CIRCULATION: Arthur Stupar
CIRCULATION MANAGER: Michelle O'Keefe
CIRCULATION FULFILLMENT MANAGER: Miriam Camp
PRODUCTION DIRECTOR: Omar Rubio
TYPOGRAPHER/WEB PRODUCER: Sandy McCroskey
PRODUCTION MANAGER: Timothy Don
NATION ASSOCIATES MANAGER: Joliange Wright
PUBLICITY AND SYNDICATION DIRECTOR: Ben Wyskida
EDUCATION/COMMUNICATIONS COORDINATOR: Habiba Alcindor
TECHNOLOGY MANAGER: Amiri K. Barksdale
ONLINE DIRECTOR: Jeff Larson
WEB PRODUCER: Kellye Rogers
WEB PRODUCER: Melisa St. Prix
CONTROLLER: Mary van Valkenburg
ASSISTANT TO VICTOR NAVASKY: Mary Taylor Schilling
DATA ENTRY/MAIL COORDINATOR: John Holtz
ASSISTANT TO THE PRESIDENT: Kathleen Thomas
RECEPTIONIST/BUSINESS ASSISTANT: Elizabeth Berniak
ADVERTISING ASSISTANT: Kit Gross
CLERK: Shavonne Frazier
ACADEMIC LIAISON: Charles Bittner

PUBLISHER EMERITUS: Victor Navasky

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR: E-mail to letters@thenation.com (300-word limit). Letters are subject to editing for reasons of space and clarity.

SUBMISSIONS: Queries only, no manuscripts. Go to www.thenation.com and click on "about," then "submissions" for a query form. Queries may be mailed to The Nation, 33 Irving Place, New York, NY 10003. SASE for poems.

INTERNET: Selections from the current issue become available Thursday night at www.thenation.com.

Printed on 100% recycled 40% post-consumer acid- and chlorine-free paper, in the USA.

This week at TheNation.com

NEWS & ANALYSIS

Katrina vanden Heuvel: No more Mr. Nice Guy

Steve Fraser: Bailout state

Rebecca Solnit: Following Iceland

Neve Gordon: Israel's right-wing surge

NATION POLL

What do you hate most about Wall Street?

VIDEO NATION

Stuart Klawans at the movies

NATION CALENDAR

Post your event!

Pay-Cap Populism

In his first week as president, Barack Obama cited years of "greed and irresponsibility on the part of some" as a major contributing factor behind our economic meltdown. In his second week, he denounced Wall Street's latest round of multibillion-dollar bonuses as "shameful." In his third week, he proposed what amounts to a "maximum wage," a $500,000 cap that would apply to at least a few banking executives lining up for a share of the exceptionally large TARP bailout.

COMMENT

So what can we expect for an encore? When he announced his executive wage cap, Obama gave us a clue. The president promised to launch a special "long-term effort" to examine "broader reforms" around executive pay.

Presidents typically convene such "long-term efforts" to kick the public policy can down the road until an energized public loses interest. Let's hope this one proves different. We desperately need a sober, thoughtful review that can get us past the muddled clichés that dominate the CEO pay debate.

Obama's remarks so far, unfortunately, have done precious little to clear up matters. At one point in his announcement, he seemed to swallow whole the conventional take that stratospheric pay levels are just fine as long as executives are meeting the criteria for performance "success" as corporate boards so narrowly define them. "This is America," Obama observed. "We believe that success should be rewarded. But what gets people upset—and rightfully so—are executives being rewarded for failure."

But other comments by the president hint at a much deeper understanding of the danger inherent in the enormous rewards that have metastasized across corporate America. "Lavish bonuses," Obama noted, are enabling a "culture of narrow self-interest and short-term gain at the expense of everything else." Executive pay excesses "have contributed to a reckless culture and quarter-by-quarter mentality that in turn have wrought havoc in our financial system."

So what should we be battling: rewards for CEO "failure" or "lavish bonuses"? The answer makes a difference.

If the problem does boil down to paying for failure, then we ought to empower shareholders. Give them a "say on pay"—the right to take advisory votes on executive pay packages—and, mainstream reformers claim, corporate boards will end their wasteful ways.

But if the problem revolves around the size of the rewards, then the solution demands more robust government action. Obama's $500,000 cap moves us a tiny, mostly symbolic step forward. Gaping loopholes abound. The cap applies only to failing firms that in the future will receive vaguely defined "exceptional assistance." And even these few firms will be able to reward top execs with unlimited millions in restricted stock they can claim once the firms repay the government. Shouldn't the rewards go first and foremost to the taxpayers, who are bankrolling recovery?

We still, in short, have plenty of work to do to end bailout profiteering. Apologists for our corporate order, naturally, will howl if the administration dares to do it. In a "free society," they'll fume, government has no right to place limits on private

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Noted.

WATCHING WAGES: A rare bolt of good news came out of Albany on January 26, when the New York Labor Department announced a new program that partners with labor and community groups to combat workplace violations like wage nonpayment, tip stealing and failure to pay overtime. **New York Wage Watch** will train grassroots organizations to monitor working conditions in their communities and refer violations to the Division of Labor Standards. **Janice Fine**, a labor scholar at Rutgers University and a former organizer, points out that most state-level enforcement is entirely complaint-driven—and since vulnerable workers risk losing their jobs or exposing their immigration status to defy abusive supervisors, most labor law violations go unreported. Now participating groups will "basically be walking a beat," says Fine. Other states have experimented with similar partnerships, but according to Fine, "no other state is doing anything this proactive."

A pilot program targeting low-wage industries where abuses are rampant will launch in New York City and Long Island before expanding statewide. The program will "increase labor law compliance by giving regular people a formal role in creating lawful workplaces," said Labor Department commissioner **M. Patricia Smith**. Among the groups enlisted so far are immigrant worker centers like the **Chinese Staff and Workers' Association** and **El Centro del Immigrante**, as well as unions like the **United Food and Commercial Workers** and the **Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union**. "New York Wage Watch is labor law enforcement at the purest, most grassroots level," enthused RWDSU president **Stuart Applebaum**. "This program will allow unions, community groups and churches to engage in the fight against the exploitation of workers in our neighborhoods." MAX FRASER

LEDBETTER'S NEXT ACT: Lawmakers are getting credit for passing the **Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act**, but another bill to fight wage discrimination is coming up short in the Senate. Signed into law by President Obama on January 29, the Ledbetter Act—named after **Lilly Ledbetter**, who lost a Supreme Court case against **Goodyear Tire**—gives victims of wage discrimination more time to file suit. But Ledbetter and women's groups stress that the law will have minimal impact without the **Paycheck Fairness Act**, which allows victims of wage discrimination to collect information about employees' salaries without fear of retaliation.

"Giving women the Ledbetter Act without Paycheck Fairness is like giving them the nail without the hammer," Ledbetter said at a recent conference sponsored by the **American Association of University Women**, which has been pushing for both bills. The Paycheck Fairness Act would also update the **Equal Pay Act** of 1963, which requires employers to show that wage gaps are a result of factors other than gender, to collect better data on wages and to develop training for women on salary negotiations. The House recently passed Paycheck Fairness, and Obama is on record as supporting it. A spring vote in the Senate is possible, but the outcome is iffy. "We're short on votes, by about a handful," said **Jim Manley**, spokesman for Senate majority leader **Harry Reid**, a supporter of the bill. "A lot of work has been done on Ledbetter. We need to do a lot more education on Paycheck Fairness." DENISE DiSTEPHAN

SMEARING SOLIS: Against the backdrop of the struggle over competing stimulus bills and the unsettling collapse of what remains of the economy, scant attention has been paid to the fight over the confirmation of **Barack Obama**'s nominee to head the Labor Department. California Congresswoman **Hilda Solis**, who perhaps best represents Obama's outside-the-Beltway base—she is a relatively young woman of color with progressive views—has struggled to gain Senate approval. Solis has been smeared by Republicans as another "tax cheat" along the lines of Treasury Secretary **Timothy Geithner** and former Health and Human Services Secretary-designee **Tom Daschle**, who had to drop out after it was revealed that he failed to pay taxes on hundreds of thousands of dollars' worth of limousine rides.

But Solis has no tax troubles; her husband recently paid off roughly $6,000 in county liens on his auto repair business, but those weren't her debts. More important, only the most irrational partisans could compare the struggles of a small business owner to those of Daschle and Geithner. So what was happening? Solis was attacked because, at a time when a revitalized Labor Department could help tip the balance in favor of working people, Senate Republicans do not want a committed progressive—whose experiences parallel those of struggling families—becoming a leader in the new administration. But the rest of us should. JOHN NICHOLS

TEACHERS' UNION: I'm rarely cheerful these days about matters that relate to schooling in America. But the decision by teachers at a **KIPP NYC** school to join the **United Federation of Teachers**, joining two other KIPP schools where the teachers are already union members, lifted my spirits. As the favorite flavor of school reform these days, KIPP (**Knowledge Is Power Program**) is perhaps the fastest-growing charter school network in the country. The organization of KIPP, which some schools are resisting, suggests that even those teachers attracted to "boot camp" reforms can see that America's young people shouldn't be in the hands of Ivy League volunteers who dedicate a few years "in passing" to education. Precisely out of loyalty to their students and to KIPP, some have begun to see teaching as a lifetime commitment that requires teachers' voices to be heard. A young KIPP teacher told me that he and his colleagues were looking to revise some aspects of the KIPP model as they became more experienced.

The organization of KIPP teachers refutes those who relentlessly and falsely suggest that unionism is a crutch only for weak teachers, or that without collective bargaining we'd easily produce good schooling for one and all. In some fifteen Southern states, teachers are denied the right to collective bargaining—and those states are among the lowest educational performers in the nation. What these KIPP teachers are telling us is that the best schools, regardless of their pedagogical philosophies, are those in which powerful and unafraid adults join the young to create powerful and unafraid schools. DEBORAH MEIER

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

corporate behavior, no right to "dictate" how much corporations pay their power suits.

In reality, we mandate limits on corporate behavior all the time. We limit how much pollution corporations can spew out. We limit the chemicals companies can sneak into their products. We limit the hours they can force employees to labor. We set these limits because we recognize that irresponsible corporate behaviors threaten our communities.

Excessive executive pay, the Wall Street meltdown has demonstrated ever so vividly, endangers our public well-being as surely as any pollutant. Jackpots have become so huge that executives will do anything to hit them. They'll even drive our economy into the ditch.

Most Americans seem to get it. That's why Senator Claire McCaskill of Missouri electrified the nation on January 30 by blasting the "idiots" of Wall Street and proposing a $400,000 pay cap at all bailed-out companies. The Senate, on a voice vote, adopted the proposal after McCaskill and Senator Bernie Sanders offered it as an amendment to the stimulus.

This $400,000 equals the salary of President Obama, who's making about twenty-five times more than the government's lowest-paid worker. Peter Drucker, the founder of modern management science, considered twenty-five to one an appropriate ratio for the private sector as well. Larger gaps, he argued before his death four years ago, undermine enterprise effectiveness and efficiency. In 2007, big-time CEOs made 344 times what the average US worker took home.

The twenty-five-to-one ratio ought to become our national pay standard, not just for bailed-out companies but for all enterprises that get government support, whether through contracts or subsidies or tax breaks. Last year Mark Hurd, Hewlett-Packard's CEO, took home $42.5 million. HP's biggest subsidiary gets more than $2 billion a year in federal contracts. Our tax dollars are, in effect, subsidizing CEO pay windfalls.

How do we start reversing this outrage? California Representative Barbara Lee is pushing legislation that would cap the amount of executive compensation firms are permitted to deduct from their corporate income taxes at twenty-five times the pay of their lowest-paid worker. If that became law, corporations could opt to continue paying their top executives tens of millions of dollars a year. But they would have to find somebody other than taxpayers to help them foot the bill.

SARAH ANDERSON AND SAM PIZZIGATI

Sarah Anderson directs the Global Economy Project at the Institute for Policy Studies. Sam Pizzigati, an associate fellow at the institute, edits Too Much, *an online weekly on excess and inequality.*

Calvin Trillin, Deadline Poet

Lesson Learned

A headlong dash for gobs of cash'll
Result in pain. Just ask Tom Daschle.

Cut the Military Budget—I

100 DAYS

The cardinal rule of bargaining is that the first number you propose should never be the number you actually think you can get, and nobody knows this better than the Defense Department. In September the *Army Times* reported that the Pentagon was preparing to box the new president in to a major increase in military spending by drawing up a budget before the election had been decided. The number it eventually leaked was $584 billion, a whopping increase of $68.6 billion over last year. It was kind of like telling the new boss that your old boss had already agreed to give you a $100,000 raise. In any other context, the sheer hubris would get you fired or laughed out of the room.

But the Pentagon budget is ruled by the appropriations equivalent of quantum physics, in which the normal rules of constraint do not apply. We still don't know how much the Obama administration is planning to give the Pentagon—the announcement of the number has been postponed—but reports indicate the number will likely be $527 billion, around an 8 percent increase instead of the 12 percent the Pentagon requested.

Despite that fact, propagandists like neoconservative Robert Kagan are already crying foul, arguing that the increase is insufficient and—more insidious—will cost jobs at a time when we're losing half a million a month. Military spending "is exactly the kind of expenditure that can have an immediate impact on the economy," Kagan recently wrote in the *Washington Post*, and any cuts would be a sign to the world that "the American retreat has begun."

"It seems like kind of the game they play every year," Miriam Pemberton, a research fellow at the Institute for Policy Studies, told me when I asked her about the rumored budget numbers. "The Pentagon puts out this hugely inflated number, and then it turns out that the 'cut' is from that hugely inflated number, so the Pentagon still wins. The number is $40 billion more than we spent last year."

You may think Barack Obama has the toughest job in Washington, but for my money it's Pemberton. Since 1989, when she left academia with a PhD in English, she's worked as an advocate for reining in the military-industrial complex in favor of a broader, less militarized approach to international security. Each year she and former Reagan Pentagon official and Center for American Progress senior fellow Lawrence Korb write an alternate Unified Security Budget. Their 2009 version identified $61 billion in cuts to military programs that could be made "with no sacrifice to our security."

Cutting the military budget has been a staple of the progressive agenda for decades, of course, but it's worth putting the budget numbers in context to highlight how out of control things have gotten across the Potomac in Arlington. Everybody knows that the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq have been mind-bogglingly expensive—about a trillion-dollar bonfire. Less noticed has been the skyrocketing of non-war-specific Pentagon funding. Since 2001 the regular Pentagon budget has increased by 77 percent, while cost overruns in weapons systems have ballooned to $300 billion. "We've never been

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

perfect there," says Korb. "But it has really gotten out of hand in the last eight years."

And those numbers don't fully capture the explosion in security spending because they don't capture security spending outside the Defense Department budget, in the departments of Justice, Energy, Homeland Security or the NSA and the CIA.

"Congress is not set up to consider the overall balance of what we're spending our money on," says Pemberton, who notes that the ratio of military to nonmilitary foreign engagement spending is eighteen to one. "Even the secretary of defense says this imbalance is not good for our security."

Indeed, over the past year Defense Secretary Robert Gates has made a series of speeches about shifting resources toward nonmilitary international engagement, as well as reducing spending on outdated weapons systems. "The spigot of defense spending that opened on 9/11 is closing," he told senators on the Armed Services Committee in January. "The economic crisis and resulting budget pressures," he said, would provide "one of those rare chances…to critically and ruthlessly separate appetites from real requirements, those things that are desirable in a perfect world from those things that are truly needed in light of the threats America faces and the missions we are likely to undertake in the years ahead."

Obama expressed similar sentiments on the campaign trail: "I will cut tens of billions of dollars in wasteful spending," he said in a campaign video. "I will cut investments in unproven missile defense systems. I will not weaponize space. I will slow our development of future combat systems."

Most recently, Rahm Emanuel hinted on *Meet the Press* that the administration might have the Pentagon in its sights as part of its promise to trim fat from the budget. "We have about $300 billion in cost overruns," he said. "That must be addressed, and we will be addressing it."

Sensing that the Obama administration has laid the rhetorical groundwork for a significant reduction of the inflated military budget, the military lobby has already launched a pre-emptive strike, pooling resources to fund a $2 million PR campaign arguing against cuts.

When in October Congressman Barney Frank called for a 25 percent reduction in the Pentagon's budget [see Frank's Comment on this page], GOP lawmakers went apoplectic, issuing a string of hysterical press releases attacking Frank as "reckless" and the proposed cuts as a "grossly irresponsible," "draconian" attempt to "gut national security."

The first concrete test of the strength of the military lobby and its allies in Congress is the battle over the fate of the F-22 Raptor fighter jet. Military experts agree that the F-22 is outdated and unnecessary. As Gates has noted, not a single F-22 mission had been flown in either of the current wars.

Production of the last Raptor is scheduled for 2011, but Congress has pressured the Pentagon (amazingly, against its will) to order more in this year's budget. Lockheed Martin, which stands to lose billions should the F-22 be discontinued, has launched an all-out PR war, leveraging the recession to argue that cutting the jet would mean the loss of 95,000 jobs. (It has even set up an online petition at preserveraptorjobs.com.) Frida Berrigan, a senior program associate at the New America Foundation, pointed out to me that with the annual cost of the F-22 coming in at $3.4 billion, simple division would suggest that each F-22 costs a staggering $35.8 million. More jobs would be created by hiring people to shred the money.

That doesn't seem to bother members of Congress who represent districts where the F-22 is produced (a surprisingly high number, since the makers intentionally spread out production to maximize Congressional influence). When Obama took questions from Democratic House members at their annual retreat, the second question came from Georgia Representative David Scott, who pleaded to keep the F-22 going. Obama was evasive: "We also have to deal with the debt, and it is unsustainable. We have to make tough decisions."

Despite the encouraging rhetoric from the administration, Lockheed Martin won the first round in December, when Gates included funding for four additional F-22s in a draft of the upcoming war supplemental. Defense lobbyists scored another victory in the appointment of Bill Lynn as deputy defense secretary. A longtime lobbyist for Raytheon, Lynn was the first recipient of a waiver from the stringent new White House rules against hiring lobbyists. Says Pemberton of Lynn, "He never met a weapons system he didn't like."

The path of least resistance for the Obama administration, legendarily parsimonious with its political capital, will be to continue on the path and avoid what will unquestionably be a vicious and hard-fought battle to impose some kind of rational boundary on the security budget. The fight for a sane rebalancing of our security budget will be led by members of the House.

Earlier in the year, Pemberton met with one of the Obama transition teams to discuss the Pentagon budget. She wouldn't tell me what they discussed, but when I asked her whether she thought they were committed to reining in the Pentagon, the weary look her in eyes made me think it's going to be, in the words of a former defense secretary, a long, hard slog.

CHRISTOPHER HAYES

Cut the Military Budget—II

COMMENT

I am a great believer in freedom of expression and am proud of those times when I have been one of a few members of Congress to oppose censorship. I still hold close to an absolutist position, but I have been tempted recently to make an exception, not by banning speech but by requiring it. I would be very happy if there was some way to make it a misdemeanor for people to talk about reducing the budget deficit without including a recommendation that we substantially cut military spending.

Sadly, self-described centrist and even liberal organizations often talk about the need to curtail deficits by cutting Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid and other programs that have a benign social purpose, but they fail to talk about one area where substantial budget reductions would have the doubly beneficial effect of cutting the deficit and diminishing expenditures that often do more harm than good. Obviously people should be concerned about the $700 billion Congress voted for this past fall to deal with the credit crisis. But even if none of that money were to be paid back—and most of it will be—it

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

would involve a smaller drain on taxpayer dollars than the Iraq War will have cost us by the time it is concluded, and it is roughly equivalent to the $651 billion we will spend on all defense in this fiscal year.

When I am challenged by people—not all of them conservative—who tell me that they agree, for example, that we should enact comprehensive universal healthcare but wonder how to pay for it, my answer is that I do not know immediately where to get the funding but I know whom I should ask. I was in Congress on September 10, 2001, and I know there was no money in the budget at that time for a war in Iraq. So my answer is that I will go to the people who found the money for that war and ask them if they could find some for healthcare.

It is particularly inexplicable that so many self-styled moderates ignore the extraordinary increase in military spending. After all, George W. Bush himself has acknowledged its importance. As the December 20 *Wall Street Journal* notes, "The president remains adamant his budget troubles were the result of a ramp-up in defense spending." Bush then ends this rare burst of intellectual honesty by blaming all this "ramp-up" on the need to fight the war in Iraq.

Current plans call for us not only to spend hundreds of billions more in Iraq but to continue to spend even more over the next few years producing new weapons that might have been useful against the Soviet Union. Many of these weapons are technological marvels, but they have a central flaw: no conceivable enemy. It ought to be a requirement in spending all this money for a weapon that there be some need for it. In some cases we are developing weapons—in part because of nothing more than momentum—that lack not only a current military need but even a plausible use in any foreseeable future.

It is possible to debate how strong America should be militarily in relation to the rest of the world. But that is not a debate that needs to be entered into to reduce the military budget by a large amount. If, beginning one year from now, we were to cut military spending by 25 percent from its projected levels, we would still be immeasurably stronger than any combination of nations with whom we might be engaged.

Implicitly, some advocates of continued largesse for the Pentagon concede that the case cannot be made fully in terms of our need to be safe from physical attack. Ironically—even hypocritically, since many of those who make the case are in other contexts anti–government spending conservatives—they argue for a kind of weaponized Keynesianism that says military spending is important because it provides jobs and boosts the economy. Spending on military hardware does produce some jobs, but it is one of the most inefficient ways to deploy public funds to stimulate the economy. When I asked him years ago what he thought about military spending as stimulus, Alan Greenspan, to his credit, noted that from an economic standpoint military spending was like insurance: if necessary to meet its primary need, it had to be done, but it was not good for the economy; and to the extent that it could be reduced, the economy would benefit.

The math is compelling: if we do not make reductions approximating 25 percent of the military budget starting fairly soon, it will be impossible to continue to fund an adequate level of domestic activity even with a repeal of Bush's tax cuts for the very wealthy.

I am working with a variety of thoughtful analysts to show how we can make very substantial cuts in the military budget without in any way diminishing the security we need. I do not think it will be hard to make it clear to Americans that their well-being is far more endangered by a proposal for substantial reductions in Medicare, Social Security or other important domestic areas than it would be by canceling weapons systems that have no justification from any threat we are likely to face.

So those organizations, editorial boards and individuals who talk about the need for fiscal responsibility should be challenged to begin with the area where our spending has been the most irresponsible and has produced the least good for the dollars expended—our military budget. Both parties have for too long indulged the implicit notion that military spending is somehow irrelevant to reducing the deficit and have resisted applying to military spending the standards of efficiency that are applied to other programs. If we do not reduce the military budget, either we accustom ourselves to unending and increasing budget deficits, or we do severe harm to our ability to improve the quality of our lives through sensible public policy.

BARNEY FRANK

Barney Frank represents the 4th District of Massachusetts in Congress and is chairman of the House Financial Services Committee.

Obama Backslides on 'State Secrets'

President Barack Obama came to office promising change and, to his credit, has already issued orders to close Guantánamo and the CIA's secret prisons and to stop the CIA's use of cruel and inhuman interrogation tactics. But in a pair of recent cases, Obama has shown a troubling unwillingness even to acknowledge the wrongs that the Bush administration committed. Both cases involve Binyam Mohammed, a Guantánamo detainee who was allegedly a victim of rendition and torture at the hands of US captors. On February 4 an English court announced that it could not disclose how US officials had interrogated Mohammed, because Washington would not let it do so, declaring the information secret. And on February 9 a Justice Department lawyer told the US Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit that a lawsuit challenging the legality of Mohammed's treatment had to be dismissed because it touched on "state secrets." In both instances the "secret" is that we tortured suspects in the "war on terror"—a secret heard round the world, but one the Obama administration is apparently unwilling to have acknowledged in a court of law. As the British judges wrote, "We did not consider that a democracy governed by the rule of law would expect a court in another democracy to suppress a summary of the evidence contained in reports by its own officials…relevant to allegations of torture and cruel, inhumane or degrading treatment, politically embarrassing though it might be." Accountability demands open acknowledgment that serious wrongs have been committed, not inflated claims of secrecy that allow the wrongs to go unremedied.

DAVID COLE

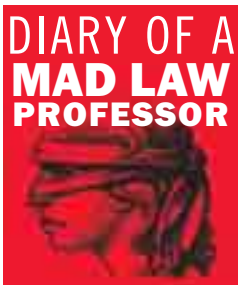
LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Patricia J. Williams

Eight Is Enough

For some years now, the biotechnology of fertility enhancement has been exalted as God's gift to the biblically barren. A relentless narrative of entitlement intertwined with prayerfulness has framed infertility as a tragedy, an oppression, an agony, a disease. Some have proclaimed a "right" to a "natural," biologically related child, a child "like me." Unusually large Middle American families—some with up to eighteen children—are offered movie deals and television programs.

Against the backdrop of a cold, impersonal and lonely world, these well-feathered and overly populated nests look villagey and warm. It's an undeniably seductive vision, even if other options like adoption and fostering are almost never mentioned. Also less discussed are the side effects of this mad race for biological generation at all costs: the likelihood of multiple births, low birth weight and birth defects; the ethics of using poorer women as fetal hatcheries; the health risks to young women who have their "Ivy League" eggs extracted for handsome sums of cash.



There are loads of good reasons to think about regulating these medical procedures; we should have come up with something other than a "free market" for them years ago. But now, with the birth of Nadya Suleman's octuplets in Bellflower, California, we are confronting a perfect storm of eugenic outcry. With a plunging economy, all the well-rehearsed elements of the "undeserving" welfare queen are lined up: Suleman is single, disabled, unemployed, on food stamps and has six other children under the age of 8, one of whom is reportedly autistic. She lives in a matchbox-size house with her resentful parents, who think she's insane. Toss in that funny, foreign-sounding name—which turns out to be, gasp, Iraqi!—and the backlash is in full swing.

No doubt Suleman has emotional problems. But rather than caring about her mental health, much of the media are content to pillory her as a drain on the public dole—selfish, frivolous, calculating and cruel. No Brangelina-style accolades of "God Bless 'Em" in *People* magazine. Just impassioned calls to cut off her remaining sources of income and to criminally prosecute the doctor who fertilized her. The *Atlanta Journal-Constitution* even ran an op-ed calling for the government to appoint a legal advocate for every child born to an unmarried woman, since the "lack of a father's guidance" must be "a major cause of [children's] suffering." Furthermore, in the case of Suleman's children, "the legal advocate would file suit against the fertility clinic or a physician who knowingly contributed to their abuse—life in a multiple-child household headed by a single woman."

Nadya Suleman's saga, in other words, has highlighted a deep cognitive dissonance about whether children are "assets" or eternal expenditure, divine joy or devilish curse in a time of dwindling planetary resources. When I first heard of Suleman, my immediate thought was of Andrea and Rusty Yates—married, fundamentalist Christian believers in that ubiquitous story line about going forth and multiplying no matter what. After caring for and home-schooling five very young children with no assistance but prayer, and with accumulating signs of postpartum psychosis, Andrea Yates woke up one morning and drowned all her children with quiet efficiency.

And so the specter of psychotic breakdown haunts me when I think of the Suleman abode: one autistic child, plus 2-year-old twins, plus four other kids ages 3 to 7, plus eight newborns ranging from one to three pounds, plus a grandfather who has gone back to Iraq to earn more money for the family, plus a grandmother furious at the medical professionals who "assisted" her daughter, plus a surreally chipper Nadya, who despite the miserable odds remains enrolled as a graduate student in, of all things, pediatric counseling. This situation is undeniably sheer madness, but the public discussion seems fixated on the question of whether she can "afford" so many kids, as though if she was rich, this would be sane.

This past fall *The New York Times Magazine* ran a cover story by Alex Kuczynski, fashion writer and self-confessed "cosmetic surgery addict." Her wish to have a child was framed by fierce determinism, the "natural outgrowth" of marriage to her husband—without whom she "would skip the child." Kuczynski is married to a man whose "sperm had a track record"—six other children by two prior wives. She, the third bride and twenty years her husband's junior, described herself as engaged in nothing less than a "battle for my fertility"; having a biological child was "necessary," a "mad desire," a "compulsion" and "proof" of the marital bond, without which she faced "wrecked hopes" and an "abyss of grief." Indeed, to die "without having created a life is to die two deaths: the death of yourself and the death of the immense opportunity that is a child." When she thinks she's pregnant, she feels a "shiver of victorious accomplishment…. my own fecundity triumphant." When she tells people she's not, she feels "barren, decrepit, desexualized," "branded with a scarlet 'I' for 'Infertile,'" "the dried-up crone with a uterus full of twigs."

Just because Kuczynski is married and wealthy does not make her less obsessive or more profound than Suleman. Kuczynski sounds like a sad, silly child mooning over "fertile but fit" stars like Halle Berry, Nicole Kidman, Salma Hayek and "John Edwards's sometime mistress," who all had babies in their 40s. Likewise, Suleman takes heart looking at Angelina Jolie. Suleman and Kuczynski represent disturbing emotional extremes. But that should not excuse the rest of us from examining the oppressive competitive natality that seems to have gripped us—the fantasies of "baby bumps" and breeding, always breeding, yet more of "our kind." Our culture's antifeminist backlash and its unrealistic aspirations have bewitched Kuczynski and Suleman, these two young women who are so addled and so suggestible, so endowed and yet so impoverished. All these years after the age of "liberation," perhaps it is time to revisit the myths we still concoct about childless women's worth. ■

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Eric Alterman

Save the News, Not the Newspaper

The American newspaper—born in Boston sometime between 1690 and 1721, depending on the prerequisites one prefers—is dying a remarkably sudden death. Overall circulation, adjusted for population growth, is about half of what it was in 1946 and is declining rapidly. And while the number of Internet readers is rising, they are no replacement for print readers from the standpoint of advertisers, who must pay the freight. To ad buyers the worth of an Internet reader is barely 10 percent of that of a print customer. Because of these and other no less destructive trends, publicly owned newspapers lost roughly 15 percent of their already falling advertising revenue last year, and with it, according to the invaluable analyses of journalism and technology maven Alan Mutter, a whopping 83 percent of their already decimated stock value. From an economic perspective, this is what it looks like to fall off a cliff.

The industry has finally wakened to the seriousness of its predicament but continues to come up empty-handed vis-à-vis anything resembling a solution. And the almost universal response to the crisis—an orgy of downsizing that is destroying the worth of the product whose economic value it seeks to restore—demonstrates how ill equipped newspaper owners and publishers are to find a way to save themselves.

Clearly an Internet-only newspaper is a nonstarter. The Huffington Post, perhaps the most successful news website, relies largely on free labor and produces precious little of what we have traditionally understood to be "news." Internet evangelist Jeff Jarvis has made much of the fact that ad revenue for LATimes.com covers the cost of its newsroom and proposes that the *Times* go paperless. He forgets, however, that even without the costs of paper production and delivery, "backroom operations" for a newsroom can be almost as expensive as the cost of the reporters and editors. There's travel, technology, rent, business planning, ad sales, health insurance, pension payments and, well, plenty of things that make this calculation a net loser. Walter Isaacson, writing in *Time*, has proposed a program of micropayments to be made by the reader, but if these average out, as Michael Kinsley predicts, to just $2 a month, it won't come close to covering the costs of reporting, editing and distributing the news.

A more promising idea is to call on foundations and philanthropists to commit the kind of cash that supports university endowments to the newspaper business and turn it into a nonprofit enterprise. *The New Yorker*'s Steve Coll notes that lovely little Williams College in bucolic Massachusetts enjoyed a (pre-recession) endowment of more than a billion dollars. He suggests that newspapers would benefit from similar largesse from those who profess to love them. Unfortunately, this assumes that those who give money to Williams (or Amherst or Wesleyan or Harvard or Yale) are doing so out of a charitable impulse rather than feeding some combination of nostalgia, status anxiety and a desire to see their names outlive their bodies. Just how newspapers can compete on this playing field in time to stave off what looks to be an epidemic of bankruptcy filings in the near future is awfully difficult to imagine.

Yet another potential panacea lies in government funding. If we can bail out banks and auto companies, goes the argument, why not an industry on which the health of democracy depends? And while direct government funding of the press is anathema to all who value free expression, we have the examples not only of the extremely independent-minded BBC and CBC but also an innovative set of steps taken by the French government to shore up that country's newspaper industry, none of which impinge on said industry's ability to write freely about the government. As sensible as this idea appears at first blush, it's hard to see it taking hold quickly enough to ride out the coming tsunami. In France, as in much of Europe, *dirigisme* is a time-honored tradition in many industries. But my sense is that not only politicians but also many journalists would let 95 percent of America's newspapers disappear before they considered accepting a nickel from the government.

Perhaps it is a mistake to try to save "the newspaper" per se. Given the unavoidable splintering of what once was a "mass" audience for just about all forms of culture and entertainment, the old-fashioned notion of a mass "newspaper" with a sports page, a comics page, a crossword puzzle and a heartwarming story about the winner of a local high school science fair is a predigital phenomenon, however great the devotion to its daily appearance on our doorstep by old farts like yours truly. Ironically, it is the sections of the paper most crucial to informed democratic discourse that are in danger of disappearing. Sports news, entertainment news, health news, fashion, celebrity and style reporting will always be with us in one form or another, because they are such delightful places to advertise.

But as *New York Times* executive editor Bill Keller pointed out in an Internet Q&A, we are losing the kind of journalism that, "however imperfect, labors hard to be trustworthy, to supply you with the information you need to be an engaged citizen." Alas, nobody wants to sell soap alongside a story of an IED killing a dozen US soldiers in Kabul or Karbala. Along these lines, Joel Kramer, former publisher of the Minneapolis *Star Tribune*, suggests the creation of a philanthropic endowment that will match donations to nonprofit enterprises doing public-affairs journalism. Indeed, plenty of people would love to provide this kind of reporting; journalism schools are filled with young people educating themselves for a profession that they are taught is about to become economically obsolete. They aren't there to get rich; they're there in the hopes of offering their fellow citizens what Walter Lippmann, writing in 1920, called "Liberty and the News." If history is any guide, you can't have one without the other. ■

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE MAN WHO WANTS TO LOOT SOCIAL SECURITY

Pete Peterson, along with an armada of establishment players from Washington to Wall Street, is using scare tactics and phony figures to persuade Congress to take away your benefits.

by WILLIAM GREIDER

Governing elites in Washington and Wall Street have devised a fiendishly clever "grand bargain" they want President Obama to embrace in the name of "fiscal responsibility." The government, they argue, having spent billions on bailing out the banks, can recover its costs by looting the Social Security system. They are also targeting Medicare and Medicaid. The pitch sounds preposterous to millions of ordinary working people anxious about their economic security and worried about their retirement years. But an impressive armada is lined up to push the idea—Washington's leading think tanks, the prestige media, tax-exempt foundations, skillful propagandists posing as economic experts and a self-righteous billionaire spending his fortune to save the nation from the elderly.

These players are promoting a tricky way to whack Social Security benefits, but to do it behind closed doors so the public cannot see what's happening or figure out which politicians to blame. The essential transaction would amount to misappropriating the trillions in Social Security taxes that workers have paid to finance their retirement benefits. This swindle is portrayed as "fiscal reform." In fact, it's the political equivalent of bait-and-switch fraud.

Defending Social Security sounds like yesterday's issue—the fight people won when they defeated George W. Bush's attempt to privatize the system in 2005. But the financial establishment has pushed it back on the table, claiming that the current crisis requires "responsible" leaders to take action. Will Obama take the bait? Surely not. The new president has been clear and consistent about Social Security, as a candidate and since his election. The program's financing is basically sound, he has explained, and can be assured far into the future by making only modest adjustments.

But Obama is also playing footsie with the conservative advocates of "entitlement reform" (their euphemism for cutting benefits). The president wants the corporate establishment's support on many other important matters, and he recently promised to hold a "fiscal responsibility summit" to examine the long-term costs of entitlements. That forum could set the trap for a "bipartisan compromise" that may become difficult for Obama to resist, given the burgeoning deficit. If he resists, he will be denounced as an old-fashioned free-spending liberal. The advocates are urging both parties to hold hands and take the leap together, authorizing big benefits cuts in a circuitous way that allows them to dodge the public's blame. In my new book, *Come Home, America*, I make the point: "When official America talks of 'bipartisan compromise,' it usually means the people are about to get screwed."

The Social Security fight could become a defining test for "new politics" in the Obama era. Will Americans at large step up and make themselves heard, not to attack Obama but to protect his presidency from the political forces aligned with Wall Street interests? This fight can be won if people everywhere

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

NOBODY OWNS THE NATION.

Not GE. Not Disney. Not Murdoch or Time Warner. We are a wholly owned subsidiary of our own conscience.

This independence is why great writers have always used *The Nation* as an Early Warning System—to expose before it's too late the frauds, felonies and follies of the all–too–private enterprise we call Our Government.

And it's why week in, week out we're read by an audience as illustrious as our authors.

If you believe, as our readers do, that the highest form of patriotism is demanding to know exactly what Government's doing in your name, why not sign on today at this *very* low rate? You can save a lot—not least of which could be your country.

THAT'S WHY SO MANY SOMEBODIES READ IT.

Margaret Cho is a longstanding **Nation** *reader.*

(Legally speaking, of course, everything has an owner, but as a *Nation* editor once wrote, "it is one of the superb facts about *The Nation* that you can no more 'own' it than you can own the spirit it represents.")

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

raise a mighty din—hands off our Social Security money!—and do it now, before the deal gains momentum. Popular outrage can overwhelm the insiders and put members of Congress on notice: a vote to gut Social Security will kill your career. By organizing and agitating, people blocked Bush's attempt to privatize Social Security. Imagine if he had succeeded—their retirement money would have disappeared in the collapsing stock market.

To understand the mechanics of this attempted swindle, you have to roll back twenty-five years, to the time the game of bait and switch began, under Ronald Reagan. The Gipper's great legislative victory in 1981—enacting massive tax cuts for corporations and upper-income ranks—launched the era of swollen federal budget deficits. But their economic impact was offset by the huge tax increase that Congress imposed on working people in 1983: the payroll tax rate supporting Social Security—the weekly FICA deduction—was raised substantially, supposedly to create a nest egg for when the baby boom generation reached retirement age. A blue-ribbon commission chaired by Alan Greenspan worked out the terms, then both parties signed on. Since there was no partisan fight, the press portrayed the massive tax increase as a noncontroversial "good government" reform.

Ever since, working Americans have paid higher taxes on their labor wages—12.4 percent, split between employees and employers. As a result, the Social Security system has accumulated a vast surplus—now around $2.5 trillion and growing. This is the money pot the establishment wants to grab, claiming the government can no longer afford to keep the promise it made to workers twenty-five years ago.

Actually, the government has already spent their money. Every year the Treasury has borrowed the surplus revenue collected by Social Security and spent the money on other purposes—whatever presidents and Congress decide, including more tax cuts for monied interests. The Social Security surplus thus makes the federal deficits seem smaller than they are—around $200 billion a year smaller. Each time the government dipped into the Social Security trust fund this way, it issued a legal obligation to pay back the money with interest whenever Social Security needed it to pay benefits.

That moment of reckoning is approaching. Uncle Sam owes these trillions to Social Security retirees and has to pay it back or look like just another deadbeat. That risk is the only "crisis" facing Social Security. It is the real reason powerful interests are so anxious to cut benefits. Social Security is not broke—not even close. It can sustain its obligations for roughly forty years, according to the Congressional Budget Office, even if nothing is changed. Even reports by the system's conservative trustees say it has no problem until 2041 (that report is signed by former Treasury Secretary Henry Paulson, the guy who bailed out the bankers). During the coming decade, however, the system will need to start drawing on its reserve surpluses to pay for benefits as boomers retire in greater numbers.

But if the government cuts the benefits first, it can push off repayment far into the future, and possibly forever. Otherwise, government has to borrow the money by selling government bonds or extend the Social Security tax to cover incomes above the current $107,000 ceiling. Obama endorses the latter option.

Follow the bouncing ball: Washington first cuts taxes on the well-to-do, then offsets the revenue loss by raising taxes on the working class and tells folks it is saving their money for future retirement. But Washington spends the money on other stuff, so when workers need it for their retirement, they are told, Sorry, we can't afford it.

Federal budget analysts try to brush aside these facts by claiming the government is merely "borrowing from itself" when it dips into Social Security. But that is a substantive falsehood. Government doesn't *own* this money. It essentially acts as the fiduciary, holding this wealth in trust for the "beneficial owners," the people who paid the taxes. This is the bait and switch the establishment intends to execute.

Peter Peterson, a Republican financier who made a fortune doing corporate takeover deals at Wall Street's Blackstone Group, is the Daddy Warbucks of the "fiscal responsibility" crusade. He has campaigned for decades against the dangers that old folks pose to the Republic. Now 82 and retired, Peterson claims he will spend nearly one-third of his $2.8 billion in wealth—he ranks 147 on the *Forbes* 400 list of richest Americans—alerting the public to this threat (leave aside the fact that old people have already paid for their retirement or that Social Security's modest benefits are equivalent to minimum-wage income). The major media treat him adoringly. Most reporters are too lazy (or dim) to check out the facts for themselves, so they simply repeat what Peterson tells them about Social Security.

Social Security is not broke—not even close. It can sustain its obligations for roughly forty years, even if nothing is changed now.

It is a frightful message. Peterson describes a "$53 trillion hole" in America's fiscal condition—but the claim assumes numerous artful fallacies. His most blatant distortion is lumping Social Security, which is self-funded and sound, with other entitlements like Medicare and Medicaid. Those programs do face financial crisis—not because the elderly and poor are greedily gaming the system but because the medical-industrial complex has the profit incentive to drive healthcare costs higher and higher. Healthcare reform can solve the financing problem only if it imposes cost controls on private players like the insurance and pharmaceutical industries.

Peterson is financing a media blitz. His tendentious documentary—*I.O.U.S.A.*—opened in 400 theaters and was broadcast on CNN with appropriate solemnity. Last September Peterson bought two full pages in the *New York Times* to urge the next president to create a "bipartisan fiscal responsibility commission" once he was in office (Peterson was for John McCain). This group of so-called experts would be authorized to design the reforms for Congress to enact. But Peterson

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

does not want Congress to have a full, freewheeling debate on the particulars. The reform package, he suggests, should be submitted to a single "up-or-down vote by Congress, as is done with military base closings." That's one of the gimmicks intended to give politicians cover and protect them from their constituents. It is profoundly antidemocratic. But that's the idea—save the government from the unruly passions of citizens. Peterson's proposal also resembles the notorious fast-track provision, which for years enabled presidents to steamroll Congress on trade agreements, no amendments allowed.

Peterson's proposal would essentially dismantle the Social Security entitlement enacted in the New Deal, much as Bill Clinton repealed the right to welfare. Peterson has assembled influential allies for this radical step. They include a coalition of six major think tanks and four tax-exempt foundations.

Their report—*Taking Back Our Fiscal Future*, issued jointly by the Brookings Institution and the Heritage Foundation—recommends that Congress put long-term budget caps on Social Security and other entitlement spending, which would automatically trigger benefits cuts if needed to stay within the prescribed limits. The same antidemocratic mechanisms—a commission of technocrats and limited Congressional discretion—would shield politicians from popular blowback.

The real crisis is not Social Security but the colossal failure of the private pension system. The solution is a new national pension.

The authors of this plan are sixteen economists from Brookings and Heritage, joined by the American Enterprise Institute, the Concord Coalition, the New America Foundation, the Progressive Policy Institute and the Urban Institute. "Our group covers the ideological spectrum," they claim. This too is a falsehood. All these organizations are corporate-friendly and dependent on big-money contributors. No liberal or labor thinkers need apply, though the group includes some formerly liberal economists like Robert Reischauer, Alice Rivlin and Isabel Sawhill.

The ugliest ploy in their campaign is the effort to provoke conflict between the generations. "The automatic funding of Social Security, Medicare and Medicaid impedes explicit consideration of competing priorities and threatens to squeeze out spending for young people," these economists declared. Children, it is suggested, are being shortchanged by their grandparents. This line of argument has attracted financial support from some leading foundations usually associated with liberal social concerns—Annie E. Casey, Charles Stewart Mott, William and Flora Hewlett. Peterson has teamed up with the Pew Trust and has also created front groups of "concerned youth."

Trouble is, most young people did not buy this pitch when George W. Bush used it to sell Social Security privatization. Most kids seem to think Grandma is entitled to a decent retirement. In fact, whacking Social Security benefits, not to mention Medicaid, directly harms poor children. More poor children live in families dependent on Social Security checks than on welfare, economist Dean Baker points out. If you cut Grandma's Social Security benefits, you are directly making life worse for the poor kids who live with her.

The assault sounds outrageous and bound to fail, but the conservative interests may have Obama in a neat trap. Their fog of scary propaganda makes it easier to distort the president's position and blame him for any fiscal disorders driven by the current financial collapse. He will be urged to "do the right thing" for the country and make the hard choices, regardless of petty political grievances (words and phrases he has used himself). Obama's fate may depend on informing the public—now, not later—so that people are inoculated against these artful lies.

The real crisis, in any case, is not Social Security but the colossal failure of the private pension system. Most people know this, either because their 401(k) account is pitifully inadequate, or their company dumped its pension plan, or the plummeting stock market devoured their savings. Obama can protect himself with the public by speaking candidly about this reality and proposing a forceful, long-term solution. He should expand the guarantees that ordinary people need to get their families through these adverse times. Instead of taking away old promises to people, the president should make some new ones. Healthcare reform is obviously an important imperative, but so is retirement security.

The solution to retirement insecurity is the creation of a national pension, alongside Social Security, that would be the bedrock social insurance. Improving Social Security benefits is one step, but it cannot possibly restore what so many middle-class families have lost. Tinkering with the 401(k) would be doomed, because it is basically a tax subsidy for the middle and upper classes, another way to avoid taxes that failed utterly to produce real savings [see Greider, "Riding Into the Sunset," June 27, 2005].

The new universal pension would be mainly self-financing—that is, funded by mandatory savings—but the system would operate as a government-supervised nonprofit, not manipulated by corporate executives or Wall Street firms. A national pension would combine the best qualities of defined-benefit plans and individual accounts. Each worker's pension would be individualized and portable, moving with job changes, but the savings would be pooled with others for diversified investment.

There is nothing radical about this approach. It follows the form of the government's thrift savings plan for civil servants and members of Congress, TIAA-CREF for college professors or other union pension plans jointly managed by labor and management trustees. The crucial difference is that since the new universal pension would be nonprofit, nobody would get to play self-interested games with the money that employees are storing in it for retirement. People could check their accumulated balance at any time.

Washington would set the performance standards and en-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The First Lincoln Turns 100!

Exclusive

Release

Special

Hoard

VDB Cents

The Coin with Many "Firsts"—First Shocked the Nation

Issued to celebrate the 100th anniversary of Lincoln's birth, the 1909 Lincoln Cent would have been coveted enough as a first-year-issue coin. But when designer Victor David Brenner conspicuously included his initials "V.D.B." on the coin's reverse, it caused a nationwide scandal.

Struck by the U.S. Mint, only a few 1909-dated Lincoln cents were minted before public outcry and protest got the initials removed from this spot forever. This was also the first cent to feature a portrait of a president, and it was the first to bear the motto "In God We Trust." 2009 represents the 100th anniversary of this beloved coin—a "must-have" coin for any collector!

We secured a small hoard of these coins in time for the centennial, but they won't last long! Plus, each 1909 V.D.B. Lincoln Cent comes in an exclusive PCGS encapsulated holder that features the scandalous initials. Orders will be accepted on a strict first-come, first-served basis. Call today to order yours—only $39.95 for one or $34.95/each for five!

800-585-9240 ext. 6702

New York Mint

©2009 Not affiliated with the U. S. Mint

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

force proper behavior, but the operations of retirement programs could be widely decentralized among many private organizations or sector by sector. Other nations, like Australia, have proved this can be both democratic and reliable. Economist Teresa Ghilarducci of the New School has designed a promising and plausible plan (available at the Economic Policy Institute's website, epi.org, or in her book *When I'm Sixty-Four: The Plot Against Pensions and the Plan to Save Them*). With payroll savings of 5 percent and government-guaranteed returns on investment, average workers could count on pensions that would replace 70 percent of pre-retirement earnings when combined with Social Security. Low-wage earners could be subsidized by government to make up for inadequate pay. Private retirement plans that collect a higher percentage of pay and provide higher benefits could continue, so long as they exceed the federal standard. One great virtue of this approach is that nobody gets left behind, dependent on charity, the predatory instincts of the financial system or the magic of the marketplace.

Another great virtue is that a national pension would confront the country's glaring economic weakness—the collapse of national savings. As the economy digs out of its hole, restoring household savings will be crucial for ultimate recovery and for reduction of our dangerous dependence on foreign capital. Obviously, any system that adds a new payroll tax cannot be introduced at the depth of a recession, but the work of constructing it can begin right now, with the new system phased in gradually, as economic conditions permit. Instead of second-guessing the past and destroying its accomplishments, this reform would look forward and create conditions for a more promising future. Nobody gets a free lunch, and everybody has to take personal responsibility. But unlike what the governing elites are attempting, nobody gets thrown over the side. ■

Blue Dogs Bark

For all its rhetorical influence, the caucus of conservative Dems hasn't accomplished much.

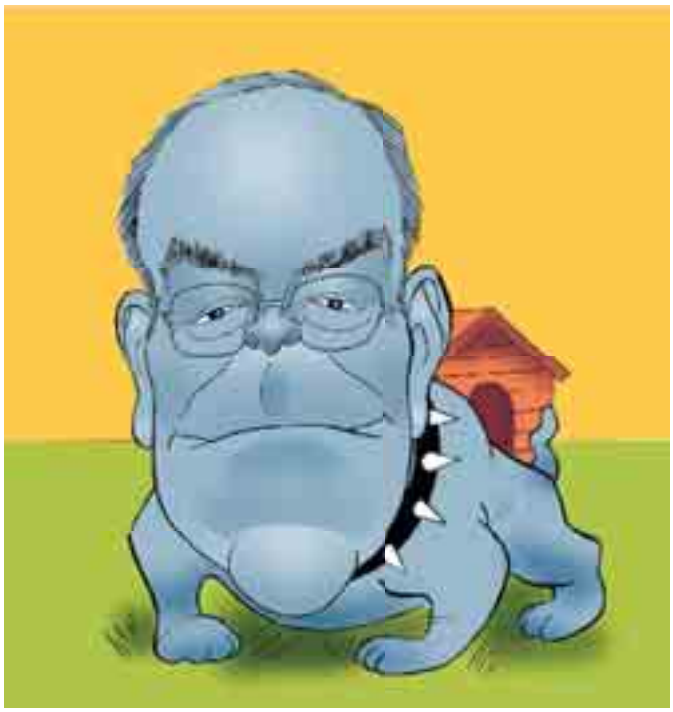
by CHRISTOPHER HAYES

The House of Representatives is a body that produces few stars, but Jim Cooper of Tennessee is a household name inside the Beltway. David Brooks has called him "one of the most thoughtful, cordial and well-prepared members of the House." He is viewed by the well-funded budget-hawk constituency as one of its most articulate advocates. Among his colleagues he has a reputation as a wonk and an intellectual—he even teaches a class at Vanderbilt University on health policy—and as the philosopher for the caucus of forty-nine conservative House Democrats known as the Blue Dogs. He gives off the slightly martyred air of someone who believes himself to be smarter than the people he works with.

In the past few weeks Cooper has emerged as the dissident-in-chief among House Democrats (a role he's been rehearsing since 1994, when his refusal to pull his "compromise" health-care proposal helped kill the Clinton plan). Cooper was one of eleven Democrats—ten of them Blue Dogs—to vote against Obama's stimulus package. A few days after the vote, Cooper caused a stir when he suggested to a local radio station that Obama's aides had encouraged him to vote against their bill, a statement he had to walk back the next day.

When I spoke to Cooper the week after the vote, he defended it as counterintuitively pro-Obama, cast against "certain Congressional old habits and bad practices. A lot of our colleagues have not gotten the change message." He expressed frustration with the speed of the process, as well as the fact that the leadership had forgone the normal committee mark-ups, saying that members were "just told how to vote."

If that was the case, I asked Cooper, why had he voted for the Troubled Asset Relief Program little more than a week after Treasury Secretary Henry Paulson sent a three-page proposal up to the Hill asking for $700 billion? "We were told," he said,



NEIL SHAPIRO

"and I believed at the time, that the TARP money was a genuine national emergency."

When you walk into Cooper's office, you are greeted by a large sign that reads:

The Blue Dog Coalition
Today the U.S. National Debt Is $50,000,000,000,000
Your Share of the National Debt: $170,000

The Blue Dogs were founded in 1995 in the wake of the GOP takeover of the House, but they didn't get much atten-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

firstSTREET for Boomers and Beyond®

HOME LIGHTING *Breakthrough*

A floor lamp that spreads sunshine all over a room.

The Balanced Spectrum® floor lamp brings many of the benefits of natural daylight indoors for glare-free lighting that's perfect for a variety of indoor activities.

Ever since the first humans built a fire in their dark cave, people have realized the importance of proper indoor lighting. But ever since Edison invented the light bulb, lighting technology has, unfortunately, remained relatively prehistoric.

Modern light fixtures do little to overcome problems associated with improper lighting, such as eyestrain, dryness, and burning. As more and more of us spend longer and longer hours in front of our computer monitor, these problems are compounded. And the effects of improper indoor lighting are not necessarily limited to a physical problem: the quantity and quality of light can also play a part in both our mood and work performance.

Studies show that sunshine can both lift your mood and enhance your energy levels. But as we all know, the sun does not always shine. Now, however, there's a solution to the problem– The **Balanced Spectrum® floor lamp** will change not only the way you see, but also the way you feel about your living and work spaces. It brings the benefits of natural daylight indoors, simulating the full spectrum of daylight.

The **Balanced Spectrum's** 27-watt compact bulb is the equivalent of a 100-watt ordinary light bulb. With the lamp's sharp visibility, you will see with more clarity and enjoyment in close tasks such as reading, writing, sewing, and needlepoint. It is especially helpful for aging eyes.

Experience sunshine indoors at the touch of a switch. This amazing lamp is not only easy on the eyes, it is easy on the hands as well, featuring a special "soft-touch, flicker-free" rocker switch that is easier to use than traditional toggle or twist switches. And its flexible gooseneck design enables you to get light exactly where you need it. The high-tech electronics, the user-friendly design, and a bulb that lasts 10 times longer than an ordinary bulb–all these features make the **Balanced Spectrum® floor lamp** a must-have.

You don't need the sun to get the natural benefits of daylight

- *See with clarity and enjoyment*
- *Creates natural, glare-free light*
- *Provides sharp visibility*
- *Flexible gooseneck design*
- *Instant-on, flicker-free light*
- *Pays for itself in energy savings over the life of the bulb*

This light can change the way you live and work

"It provides excellent lighting which is very close to true daylight. The lamp itself is light enough to be moved easily around a room and an office. The glare-free characteristics provide a very non-stressful illumination for prolonged reading.
–Stanley G., M.D.

"As soon as I turned on the lamp and began to read the newspaper I could see the wonderful difference. This lamp is just what I needed. Thank you so much.
–Donna E.

Dozens of testimonials on file.
Results not typical.

Technology revolutionizes the light bulb

- *Save almost $61 over the life of the bulb*
- *8,000 hours bulb life*
- *Energy efficient*
- *Shows true colors*

Try the Balanced Spectrum® floor lamp for the best value ever! Now more than ever is the time to add sunshine to every room in your home at this fantastic low price! The Balanced Spectrum® floor lamp comes with *first*STREET's exclusive guarantee. Try this lamp for 90 days and return it for the product purchase price if not completely satisfied.

Balanced Spectrum® floor lamp
Item# BB-3589 . . . . . **was ~~$59.95~~**

Call now for $10 instant savings!

Only $49.95 each + S&H

*Order two Balanced Spectrum® floor lamps and get **FREE shipping** on both lamps.

*Free shipping within the contiguous 48 states only.

Please mention promotional code 37799.

For fastest service, call toll-free 24 hours a day.

1-800-790-0312

We accept all major credit cards, or if you choose, you can pay by check over the phone. To order by mail, please call for details.

www.balancedspectrum.com

firstSTREET for Boomers and Beyond®
1998 Ruffin Mill Road
Colonial Heights, VA 23834

All rights reserved. © 2007 TechnoBrands®, Inc.

41472

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tion until the Democrats took it back in 2006. If you read any of the postelection coverage, it was the freshmen Blue Dogs like Pennsylvania's Chris Carney and North Carolina's Heath Shuler who had upset high-profile Republicans who were the MVPs of the cycle and the party's new voice. Leaders of the House Pack? the *Philadelphia Inquirer* asked in a headline, Blue Dogs Could Point Way for Democrats.

Their star turn extended through much of the 110th Congress, as caucus members flexed their muscles on their signature issue: fiscal discipline. They pushed House Speaker Nancy Pelosi to adopt "pay-go" rules, which required all new expenditures (except, notably, those for the war) to be offset by tax increases or corresponding spending cuts. Their outsize influence frustrated progressive activists who viewed their support for the Iraq occupation and expanded government surveillance powers and their opposition to "net neutrality" as obstacles to fulfilling the progressive promise of the new Congress. The website Open Left labeled the group "Bush Dogs" and began documenting the ways they enabled right-wing legislation.

"Remember, you don't get to choose your politics," Cooper told me when I visited his office one morning in December. "The voters choose you. All Blue Dogs and our predecessors were trying to do is reach people who don't read *The Nation*.... Why have people been begging to be Blue Dogs? Because it's a brand of Democrats people in the heartland can trust. It partly means fiscal conservatism and it partly means we're not going to rubber-stamp the rest of the [party] agenda."

In the 110th Congress, the Blue Dogs' clout made a kind of sense. The caucus was larger than the Democrats' margin, which meant they were the proverbial swing voter—and fawned over as a result. But in the 111th Congress, the Democrats' margin is big enough to pass legislation without a single Republican or Blue Dog vote. On top of that, the severity of the economic crisis has moved the center of debate decidedly away from the Blue Dogs' cardinal issue of fiscal austerity. There's a broad consensus among economists that we need to run large short-term deficits to avoid levels of unemployment and misery we haven't seen in seventy years. So you'd think the Blue Dogs would have as central a role in today's debate as pacifists did in the months after 9/11.

But not so. The Blue Dogs continue to wield influence. Before the stimulus could be brought to the floor, the House had to approve emergency orders to expedite the process. The Blue Dogs balked and threatened to rebel until the White House sent a letter to several House committee chairs reaffirming its commitment to return to pay-go budgeting after the stimulus is passed. In the end, half the caucus voted against the leadership anyway. The week after the stimulus passed the House, Blue Dog co-chair Stephanie Herseth Sandlin sent an open letter to Pelosi and House majority leader Steny Hoyer expressing the caucus's support for efforts by Senate Republicans and conservative Democrats to cut approximately $100 billion from the package—including money for things like school construction, rural broadband and early childhood programs. "We believe that's a highly worthwhile goal," they wrote.

Meanwhile, the media remain obsessed. As Talking Points Memo's Elana Schor recently noted, press mentions of the Blue Dogs outnumbered mentions of the Progressive Caucus by nearly ten to one between mid-October and mid-January. This despite the Progressive Caucus being larger and having far more members in the leadership.

I've spent the past few months trying to sort out why the Blue Dogs get so much attention. The best I can tell, there are two main reasons. One has to do with the organizational mechanics of the Blue Dog caucus, which is more unified and cohesive than any other in the House. The other has to do with the ongoing Beltway love affair with "fiscal conservatism."

If Blue Dogs felt 'choked blue' by lavish spending, the timing of their founding, in 1995, doesn't make a whole lot of sense.

The first-ever House caucus was in many ways the opposite of today's Blue Dogs. Founded in 1959, the liberal Democratic Study Group was created by Congressional liberals who wanted to organize their opposition to the conservative Southerners who chaired the most important committees and routinely foiled liberal legislation, particularly on civil rights and labor. Beginning in the '70s, as the South migrated toward the GOP, Southern Democrats found themselves further from the mainstream of the party and the levers of power, and responded with a caucus of their own, the "boll weevils." After Democrats made large gains in the 1982 midterms, the boll weevils' influence was greatly reduced and the group eventually petered out, replaced in 1995 by the House Blue Dog caucus.

The Blue Dogs' website explains their name thus: "Taken from the South's longtime description of a party loyalist as one who would vote for a yellow dog if it were on the ballot as a Democrat, the 'Blue Dog' moniker was taken by members of The Coalition because their moderate-to-conservative views had been 'choked blue' by their party in the years leading up to the 1994 election."

But like a lot of aspects of the Blue Dog mythology, this doesn't hold up. If Blue Dogs felt choked blue by fellow Democrats' lavish spending, the timing of their founding doesn't make a whole lot of sense. Clinton had just pushed through a budget that reduced the deficit by 12 percent and put it on a glide path to surplus. It seems just as likely that Democrats from conservative districts who survived the bloodbath of 1994 understood that their future electoral success depended on distancing themselves from the Democratic Party.

For most of the Clinton and early Bush years, the Blue Dogs weren't much of a factor. But after the 2006 midterms, the caucus grew dramatically from thirty-seven members to forty-seven, and the Blue Dog PAC became a financial juggernaut, raising more than $2.6 million (lots of it from corporate PACs) for the 2008 cycle.

While the Progressive Caucus is larger and more integrated into the House leadership, the Blue Dogs are arguably more effective. This is partly because of the drawbacks of size: the

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Chaos Made Clear

Understand Chaos Theory with This 24-Lecture Series Taught by an Award-Winning Professor

It has been called the third great revolution of 20th-century physics, after relativity and quantum theory. But how can something called chaos theory help you understand an *orderly* world? What practical things might it be good for? What, in fact, *is* chaos theory?

The 24 thought-provoking lectures of **Chaos** take you to the heart of chaos theory as it is understood today. Taught by Cornell University Professor Steven Strogatz, this course introduces you to a fascinating discipline that has more to do with your everyday life than you may realize.

Chaos theory—the science of systems whose behavior is sensitive to small changes in their initial conditions—affects nearly every field of human endeavor, from astronomy and zoology to the arts, the humanities, and business. In its ability to tackle bewildering problems like stock market fluctuations and the flow of data traffic on the Internet, chaos theory truly has revolutionized science.

Chaos shows you the importance of this field and how it has helped us come closer than ever to solving some of life's mysteries. You learn how chaos theory was discovered; investigate the main ideas of chaos including the butterfly effect, iterated maps, and fractals; and discover the practical applications of chaos in areas like encryption, medicine, and space mission design.

This course is one of the only places outside academia where you can follow along with detailed computer graphics—specifically developed for this course—as visual aids. Forgoing a heavy reliance on advanced math, Professor Strogatz uses these clear and powerful graphics to clarify core concepts.

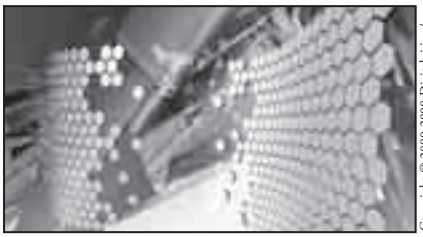
Whether charting the history of the field or journeying to the frontiers of chaos research, **Chaos** shows you new ways to think about and view the world around you.

About Your Professor

Professor Steven Strogatz is the Jacob Gould

About Our Sale Price Policy

Why is the sale price for this course so much lower than its standard price? Every course we make goes on sale at least once a year. Producing large quantities of only the sale courses keeps costs down and allows us to pass the savings on to you. This approach also enables us to fill your order immediately: 99% of all orders placed by 2 pm eastern time ship that same day. Order before March 16, 2009, to receive these savings.



Copyright © 2000-2008 Digitalvision/ Inmagine.

Schurman Professor of Applied Mathematics and Professor of Theoretical and Applied Mechanics at Cornell University. He received his Ph.D. from Harvard University. Professor Strogatz is the author of *Nonlinear Dynamics and Chaos*, the most widely used textbook on chaos theory. In 2007, he received the Communications Award—a lifetime achievement award for the communication of mathematics to the general public—from the Joint Policy Board for Mathematics, which represents the four major American mathematical societies.

About The Teaching Company®

We review hundreds of top-rated professors from America's best colleges and universities each year. From this extraordinary group we choose only those rated highest by panels of our customers. Fewer than 10% of these world-class scholar-teachers are selected to make The Great Courses®.

We've been doing this since 1990, producing more than 3,000 hours of material in modern and ancient history, philosophy, literature, fine arts, the sciences, and mathematics for intelligent, engaged, adult lifelong learners. If a course is ever less than completely satisfying, you may exchange it for another, or we will refund your money promptly.

Lecture Titles

1. The Chaos Revolution
2. The Clockwork Universe
3. From Clockwork to Chaos
4. Chaos Found and Lost Again
5. The Return of Chaos
6. Chaos as Disorder—The Butterfly Effect
7. Picturing Chaos as Order—Strange Attractors
8. Animating Chaos as Order—Iterated Maps
9. How Systems Turn Chaotic
10. Displaying How Systems Turn Chaotic
11. Universal Features of the Route to Chaos
12. Experimental Tests of the New Theory
13. Fractals—The Geometry of Chaos
14. The Properties of Fractals
15. A New Concept of Dimension
16. Fractals Around Us
17. Fractals Inside Us
18. Fractal Art
19. Embracing Chaos—From Tao to Space Travel
20. Cloaking Messages with Chaos
21. Chaos in Health and Disease
22. Quantum Chaos
23. Synchronization
24. The Future of Science

THE TEACHING COMPANY®
The Joy of Lifelong Learning Every Day™
GREAT PROFESSORS, GREAT COURSES, GREAT VALUE GUARANTEED.™

SAVE $185!
OFFER GOOD UNTIL MARCH 16, 2009

1-800-TEACH-12 (1-800-832-2412)
Fax: 703-378-3819

Special offer is available online at
www.TEACH12.com/6ntn

The Great Courses
THE TEACHING COMPANY
4151 Lafayette Center Drive, Suite 100
Chantilly, VA 20151-1232

Priority Code 33041

Please send me **Chaos**, which consists of twenty-four 30-minute lectures plus Course Guidebooks.

☐ **DVD $69.95** (std. price $254.95) **SAVE $185!**
plus $10 shipping, processing, and Lifetime Satisfaction Guarantee

☐ **Check or Money Order Enclosed**

* Non-U.S. Orders: Additional shipping charges apply. For more details, call us or visit the FAQ page on our website.

** Virginia residents please add 5% sales tax.

Charge my credit card:

☐ VISA ☐ ☐ ☐

ACCOUNT NUMBER EXP. DATE

SIGNATURE

NAME (PLEASE PRINT)

MAILING ADDRESS

CITY/STATE/ZIP

PHONE *(If we have questions regarding your order—required for international orders)*

☐ **FREE CATALOG.** Please send me a free copy of your current catalog (no purchase necessary).

Special offer is available online at www.TEACH12.com/6ntn
Offer Good Through: March 16, 2009

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

bigger you are, the harder it is to achieve consensus, and as a result Progressive Caucus members rarely take positions en masse. Blue Dogs, on the other hand, have limited their membership to 25 percent of the House Democratic caucus and take official positions on bills only if they have the support of two-thirds of their members. (In the 110th Congress, that was only six bills, including a corporate average fuel economy standards [CAFE] bill, the war funding accountability bill and the bipartisan FISA compromise.)

This allows the Blue Dogs to operate more like a junior parliamentary coalition partner than the loose federation that is the Progressive Caucus. "They're organized," a progressive Representative's chief of staff told me. "When you're dealing with the Blue Dogs, you know you're dealing with an entity that has a very narrow focus—but that they have a structure that says they can deliver votes, and they know where all their members are going to be." This meant that in the 110th Congress, they could "control outcomes of votes."

Also, she added, the Blue Dogs have more latitude to take on the House leadership because they stand almost entirely outside it. Indeed, part of what makes Blue Dog membership so appealing to new members (aside from branding themselves as "independent" and "moderate" to constituents back home) is that it provides an alternate leadership ladder and support network. The caucus has three co-chairs who serve two-year terms; new leaders cycle through, and relatively junior members like Herseth Sandlin and Shuler can quickly bypass the long seniority slog to a high-profile position.

The caucus is also uncommonly tightknit socially. "I don't want to sound shmaltzy about this," Carney told me, "but there is somewhat of a familiar feeling in the Blue Dogs. We have each other's backs. A large number of the guys I hung out with early on when I first came out on the Hill are my friends and are Dogs as well. It's a very good, comfortable fit for many of us." That could be partly because the caucus is more homogeneous than the party as a whole: more male, white and Southern. In the words of one progressive Democratic House member: "It's a fraternity."

By calling themselves fiscal conservatives, they get to distance themselves from liberals without alienating the Dems' strongest interest groups.

This "fraternity" is ostensibly built around a single issue: fiscal discipline. It's a term that is both more and less than it appears.

Everyone understands that Democrats attempting to represent conservative districts have to convince their constituents that despite the D next to their name, they hear them, understand them and share their concerns and worldview. But to do this they've chosen to invest a tremendous amount of political capital in something that, well, no one cares about. In a recent national poll of priorities, the deficit/debt came in a distant sixth, after regulating the financial industry, ending the war in Iraq and healthcare reform. This could be because the national debt as a percentage of GDP is well within post–World War II norms. A Democratic Congressional candidate who unsuccessfully challenged a Republican incumbent in a conservative district in the South put it to me this way: "Nobody brings up the deficit. Ever."

But fiscal conservatism is actually a kind of token. What has empowered Blue Dogs the most, and given them their platform, is the strange reversal in the political valence of the issue of balanced budgets. For much of the past century, a balanced budget was viewed by conservatives as key to controlling inflation and restraining the growth of government. Republicans stood for balanced budgets while Democrats, under the influence of FDR's success and Keynesian fiscal policy, were more willing to run deficits to stimulate the economy and keep unemployment low.

But starting in the 1980s, things flipped. First, the supply-siders took over the Republican Party, hewing alternately to a belief that massive tax cuts would pay for themselves (they didn't) or the Machiavellian view that running up massive deficits would "starve the beast" and force later administrations to reduce the size of government radically or face bankruptcy. Meanwhile, neoliberals like Robert Rubin helped persuade Clinton to embrace a balanced budget; the economic growth and surpluses that followed are trotted out as causally connected by nearly all Democrats running for national office.

This inheritance has a special role for Blue Dogs: by calling themselves fiscal conservatives, they get to use the adjective "conservative" and distance themselves from the liberals in their party without arousing the ire of the Democratic coalition's strongest interest groups. "If you're a Democrat and say, I'm gonna be against abortion, that's going to be more dramatic [and difficult] than if you say, I'm for reducing the deficit and balancing the budget," says Princeton Congressional historian Julian Zelizer. "It's a little less explosive a way to break with your party leadership."

Until recently, it also provided Blue Dogs with an argument to use against their Republican opponents by outflanking them on the right. "The idea," Blue Dog spokeswoman Kristen Hawn told me, "is that this isn't a Republican issue: *they're* the ones that have been irresponsible."

For all their cohesiveness, positive press and legislative leverage, the Blue Dogs haven't produced a ton of legislative accomplishments on their signature issue. On the two most massive expenditures of the last Bush years—the Iraq War and the financial bailout—they've offered little organized resistance. The offsets on the issues on which they've been able to enforce pay-go—like the tax increases to pay for the new GI bill, which the Blue Dogs peg at $63 billion—pale in comparison with the cost of the Iraq/Afghanistan wars and the bailout, which have cost more than $1 trillion over the past two years.

Where Blue Dogs have perhaps been most effective is in helping Republicans pass legislation and blocking or diluting progressive legislation. During the months-long debate in 2006 over the Military Commissions Act, which was crafted explicitly to deny the right of habeas corpus to enemy combatants,

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ORGANIZE AND SUPPORT THE CAUSE RESPONSIBLY!!

Find some of the most prominent left-progressive think tanks and policy and advocacy groups on the Left.

Americans for Democratic Action.
The ADA is one of the oldest liberal lobbying organizations in the country. Founded in 1947 by prominent anticommunist liberals, among them Eleanor Roosevelt, Hubert H. Humphrey, John Kenneth Galbraith, and Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., the ADA continues to back progressive candidates and lobby for liberal legislation. www.adaction.org www.eliberal.org

Institute for Policy Studies.
IPS, born in 1963, was the first liberal think tank. Some of its ideas, such as model cities and the Teacher Corps, were given a legislative tryout by the Kennedy-Johnson administrations. Recently, IPS sparked a Cities for Peace initiative under which more than 200 cities and towns passed resolutions against the Iraq war. www.ips-dc.org

Citizens Trade Campaign.
CTC emerged amid the fight against NAFTA back in 1992. Working with allies, it has brought into the sunshine Congress members' votes on trade issues. The group has highlighted the major downsides of free trade policies and advocated for international trade rules and fair-trade coalitions. www.citizenstrade.org

Edward Koren

Greenpeace.
Greenpeace is one of the most courageous and in-your-face environmental groups, its members challenging eco-invaders at the risk of their lives and liberties. Its operations have always been global in reach and it has branches in more than thirty countries and 200,000 members. www.greenpeace.org

Find more in ***THE NATION GUIDE TO THE NATION*, your guide to the left in America from *The Nation* Magazine, America's biggest and leading political and cultural weekly. Telling the world since 1865.** By Richard Lingeman and the Editors of *The Nation*. Introduction by Victor Navasky and Katrina vanden Heuvel. Original Drawings by Edward Koren

PUBLISHED EXCLUSIVELY IN PAPERBACK BY VINTAGE BOOKS
AVAILABLE WHEREVER BOOKS ARE SOLD

Find out more and tell us about your favorite places at www.thenation.com/nationguide/

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

many Blue Dogs supported the bill (against the directive of the Democratic House leadership), and ultimately twenty-three of thirty-seven voted for it. And it's not just on national security issues that they've played this role. In 2007 Representative Brad Miller proposed legislation that would have amended bankruptcy law to allow judges to alter home mortgage terms, a reform seen by many Democrats as necessary to reduce the number of foreclosures. But according to *National Journal*'s online Congress Daily, "bankers…knew exactly whom to go to in order to stop the bill in its tracks: the Blue Dog Coalition of moderate-to-conservative Democrats." Sixteen members of the caucus signed a letter objecting to the legislation, prompting it to be pulled from consideration on the floor. As of this writing, it has yet to pass the House.

Positions like this have convinced many progressives that Blue Dogs are little more than bought-and-paid-for agents of big business. One corporate lobbyist explained the Blue Dogs' fundraising prowess this way: companies say to themselves, "Blue Dog Democrats are probably going to be more business-friendly, so let's give them more campaign contributions.… You get elected, you join the Blue Dogs…the money comes flowing." Individual fundraising is then amplified by contributions from the Blue Dog PAC, much of it from large corporations like UBS ($10,000), Citigroup ($10,000) and Coca-Cola ($10,000).

As much as politicians hate to be accused of being influenced by money, the Blue Dogs haven't necessarily gone out of their way to disabuse people of this notion: at last year's Democratic National Convention, the Blue Dog reception (with open bar!) was sponsored and paid for by the telecom industry, which was feeling generous after forty-five of the forty-seven members voted to grant it immunity from civil suits for collusion with unlawful domestic spying.

In late February, Obama will host a "fiscal responsibility summit," which the Blue Dogs will be attending, an event they demanded as the price for their (reluctant) cooperation with the stimulus bill. On the agenda is "entitlement reform," the longstanding dream of the Concord Coalition and the Peterson Institute to shrink the social welfare state [see William Greider's article on page 11]. The full roster has yet to be announced, but it won't be surprising if Cooper is one of the headliners.

It's unclear in just what direction the summit will go, but in Washington, the perception of power is indistinguishable from actual power. And if the Blue Dogs don't have much of the latter, they have the former in spades.

The majority of the Blue Dogs voted for the stimulus package the first time around and will likely do so again when it comes out of conference committee. But their leverage is more rhetorical and political than legislative. By continuing to reinforce the notion that nonmilitary spending is pork, favors to special interests, they lend credence to a deeply entrenched conservative Beltway critique of government—that its biggest problem is that it provides too much to its citizens.

Cooper captured this sentiment perfectly in explaining his opposition to the stimulus. He was skeptical about some of the spending—notably for expanded Medicaid eligibility pools—saying it wouldn't last just two years but would extend into the future. When I asked why, he said, "Once you hand out Snickers bars, people tend to want more Snickers bars."

This kind of rhetoric obscures the deeper questions of what government should provide, and which groups get squeezed when the screws are tightened. Under Cooper's framing it's all Snickers bars. So when conservative Democrats and so-called moderate Republicans in the Senate, with the support of the Blue Dogs in the House, cut $100 billion from the stimulus package, they left in an estimated $36 billion new home tax credit whose benefits would skew heavily toward the upper middle class and wealthy, while cutting $98 million in school nutrition programs for poor kids.

For the record, they don't, as a rule, serve Snickers bars in school lunches. ■

Britain's Winter of Discontent

The grim economic news raises a stark question: is Britain too big to fail?

by D.D. GUTTENPLAN

London

Less than three months have passed since that halcyon day when Gordon Brown, not previously known as a gaffe-prone politician, provoked howls of mirth in the House of Commons after claiming that his government's prompt response to the credit crunch had "saved the world." George W. Bush was still in the White House, and the contrast between the British prime minister's bold plan to partly nationalize failing banks—making billions of pounds of fresh capital and government loan guarantees available in return for preferred shares—and Henry Paulson's dithering made Brown's boast, though unintended, almost plausible. (He'd meant to say "saved the banks"—a confusion that tells its own story.) But no one's laughing now.

On February 4 Brown told Parliament that a combination of fiscal and monetary stimulus was needed "to take the world out of depression." Though he tried to pass off his use of the D-word as another slip of the tongue, Brown's inadvertent candor was only the latest sign that this really is the winter of Britain's discontent:

§ On January 28 the International Monetary Fund predicted the global economic crisis will hit Britain harder than any other developed country, with the economy expected to shrink by

D.D. Guttenplan writes from The Nation*'s London bureau. American Radical, his biography of I.F. Stone, will be published in June.*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

2.8 percent this year. (The projected downturn in the United States is 1.6 percent.)

§ Just as Britons dug out from the heaviest snowfall in decades, a wave of wildcat strikes at power plants and oil refineries over the use of foreign labor threatened the country's energy supplies. Echoing Brown's 2007 slogan of "British jobs for British workers," the protests were a reminder of the dangers to domestic peace posed by a long-term slump.

§ To compound Brown's worries, the most recent poll by the *Guardian* showed that nearly two-thirds of British voters thought the government's efforts to contain the crisis were doomed. Overall, the Tories, flat-lining since the economy turned sour, now lead Labour by 44 percent to 32 percent.

§ On February 10 cabinet minister Ed Balls, Brown's closest ally, warned that the crisis is "more extreme and serious than that of the 1930s."

Like the Groundhog Day blizzard that brought Britain to a standstill, not all the country's economic troubles are the government's fault. Wall Street bankers were no better at pricing risk than their counterparts in the City of London; the temptation to ride the debt-inflated housing bubble no easier to resist in Dubai, Dublin or Dallas. And just as Bush inherited the laissez-faire ideology of Ronald Reagan, so the tide of deregulation here runs back to Margaret Thatcher. The difference is that Britain's Faustian bargain with the money markets was sealed by a politician who has been described as a socialist.

NEIL SHAPIRO

It was Gordon Brown who put out the welcome mat to flight capital from around the globe; Gordon Brown who, in exchange for a little stealthy redistribution around the edges (more money for schools and hospitals, a minimum wage), promised to keep taxes low and lionized speculators. And it was Gordon Brown who arranged for "Fred the Shred" Goodwin, the slash-and-burn chair of the Royal Bank of Scotland (RBS), to become "Sir Fred." During his ten years as Tony Blair's Chancellor of the Exchequer, Brown was only too happy to take the credit as British bankers, encouraged by New Labour's "light touch" approach to financial regulation, stuffed their pockets with cash, bidding up the price of everything from vintage Bollinger to the gas-guzzling SUVs known here as Chelsea tractors. Speaking to an audience of fund managers in June 2007, Brown was in typically flattering mode, saluting their "remarkable achievements, an era that history will record as the beginning of a new golden age for the City of London."

Now that the party is over, the flight capital has fled and Goodwin has resigned in disgrace (the taxpayers have had to stump up £20 billion to keep RBS afloat), it is hardly surprising that an increasingly desperate public blames Brown for its troubles. The Bank of England, which cut interest rates to 1 percent in early February—the lowest level in more than 300 years—may prefer to say that the economy "is in the throes of a severe and synchronized downturn." But with monetary policy running out of runway, the pound trading at record lows against the yen and the dollar, and unemployment above 6 percent and rising fast, the controversy over what to call the country's financial crisis has become less interesting, and less frightening, than another far more stark question: is Britain too big to fail?

Crispin Odey, a hedge-fund boss whose prescience about the weakness of British banks brought him a £28 million bonus last year, observed that Britain risks "being exposed as a small country with debt it cannot repay." Investment guru Jim Rogers, former partner of George Soros, was even more blunt. "Sell any sterling you might have," Rogers told Bloomberg. "It's finished. I hate to say it, but I would not put any money in the UK."

Behind such comments lurks the specter of another bankrupt island nation—the fear, as *The Economist* recently put it, that a city known in boom times as Manhattan-on-Thames, or Londongrad for all its wealthy Russian exiles, might turn into Reykjavik-on-Thames. In October, when Iceland became the first national casualty of the credit crunch, the notion that Britain might follow its northern neighbor into bankruptcy seemed absurd. Like the City of London, Iceland's banking sector owed its spectacular growth to transactions in foreign currencies and debt-fueled acquisitions. Yet once the Icelandic króna started to slide, the government could do little to protect it. Unable to pay its foreign debts or buy imports, Iceland was forced to call in the IMF. As *BusinessWeek* recently pointed out, the $2.8 trillion balance sheet of RBS (currently 68 percent owned by the British taxpayer) alone is larger than Britain's entire gross domestic product. Exact comparisons are hard to pin down, in part because different sources give different figures for total debt. And even after two decades of malign neglect by Thatcher and Blair, manufacturing and mining still account for about 17 percent of the British economy. The perils of remaining outside the big currency blocs are the same, though, which is why Iceland's new left-wing prime minister, Johanna Sigurdardottir, said she thought her country's "best option is…to join the EU and adopt the euro."

Might Britain follow suit? Opposition to the euro is the cornerstone of Tory foreign policy, and though Labour is theoretically open to joining, even the Liberal Democrats (led by former *Nation* intern Nick Clegg), still the most pro-European of the three major parties, recently dropped their long-term commitment to join the euro.

But if politics has closed one road out of Britain's predicament, it might also open others. So far the government has limited itself to what might be termed financial firefighting: recapitalizing failing banks, trying to stimulate lending with government loan guarantees, forcing short sellers (speculators who sell borrowed stock, hoping to make a profit when share prices fall) to disclose their positions. On February 13 the Bank of England will begin a £50 billion asset swap, buying up companies' short-term debts and offering Treasury bills in exchange. Though criticized by the Tories as ineffectual, none of these measures have been particularly controversial. Even Richard Lambert, the former editor of the *Financial Times* who now heads the Confederation of British Industry, said that Brown's latest moves "are almost exactly the measures we at the CBI have been asking for. So we are pleased."

The problem is that so far the medicine isn't working. And

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Brown, who famously promised voters "no more boom and bust," seems unable to articulate a fresh vision, a narrative of national renewal comparable to President Obama's call to remake America. Perhaps because that would entail admitting that a return to the day before the disaster, when bankers called the tune and politicians danced, is as undesirable as it is impossible.

Yet inaction has its perils. The government's reluctance to get too involved in running the banking system risks creating "zombie banks," says Scott Urban, former senior editor and consultant at Oxford Analytica, a strategic consulting firm. "You can pump in all the money you want, but these banks will still be extremely risk-averse." The wave of oil refinery strikes, like the French general strike and earlier protests in Greece, suggests that in Britain, too, the surface placidity of everyday life masks considerable discontent. "In Labour's working-class heartlands," says Jon Cruddas, MP for Dagenham, "there is a powerful feeling of being dispossessed."

Cruddas faults the government for doing nothing during the boom years to halt the European Union's "race to the bottom," leaving British workers among the least protected in Europe. Though he sits on Labour's back benches, Cruddas, who comes from a Catholic working-class family and arrived at his politics by way of liberation theology, has become an increasingly influential voice urging the party toward greater economic activism. Perhaps surprisingly, he doesn't favor wholesale nationalization—"Why should the government have to price the banks' toxic assets? Let the market do that"—but says they might as well put the banks they've been forced to buy to good use. One idea is a National Infrastructure Bank, issuing public works bonds to fund railway improvements, bridges, wireless broadband, etc. (Similar ideas have been proposed in the United States, bolstered by regulator Elizabeth Warren's revelations about how little Washington got for its TARP billions.)

More radical is Cruddas's plan for social credit and microlending, turning the hundreds of recently shuttered post offices into community development banks—another model, pioneered by the Grameen Bank in Bangladesh, as well as ShoreBank in the United States. (Peter Mandelson, the New Labour godfather serving as business secretary, endorsed a version of the "People's Bank" plan—an indication of the shift in politics here.)

Cruddas's really big idea is for a housing bank, using Northern Rock, an S&L taken over by the government a year ago, as a vehicle to enable local councils to build 250,000 units of public housing a year. "Since Thatcher got the government out of the housing business, we've got 2 million families on council waiting lists," he says. "Even in boom times there was no way the private sector was going to house those people." With so much of the construction industry idle, Cruddas says, housing could be "Labour's equivalent of the TVA—a program that changes lives and transforms politics."

With no need to call an election until 2010, Gordon Brown might just have enough time to turn the crisis into an opportunity. First, though, he has to keep his balance—and find his nerve. ■

Exchange

(continued from page 2)

sponsibility I, as their proud but humble descendant, have inherited to always seek truth and justice. Bravo!
Shannen Dee Williams

New York City
How could you possibly have left Eleanor Roosevelt off that cover?
William Parker

Gainesville, Fla.
Where, oh where, is A. Philip Randolph?
Bob Zieger

Thiells, N.Y.
I dug the cover, but what happened to Walter Reuther?
Cameron Brown

Houston
I really enjoyed the cover. But I missed a few faces: Abraham Joshua Heschel and Albert Vorspan, who marched with Dr. King in Selma. And where are Cordell Reagon and Bernice Johnson Reagon of the Freedom Singers? I would have included Ruth Bader Ginsburg too, but that's just me.
Sophi Zimmerman

Mavroudis Replies

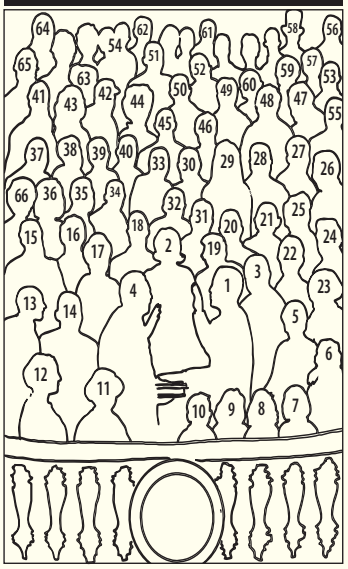
San Francisco
Thanks so much for all the kind words. It was a humbling experience to learn about so many who gave so much to create such a moment.

Because a cover is only so big, there's obviously not enough room for the literally millions of people who deserved to be on that podium, but I hope it's a good representation of the civil rights movement. I knew many of those figures, but along the way I learned about Bayard Rustin, Ida Wells, William Still and, a bit too late for inclusion, many others… including Fannie Lou Hamer of the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party.
John Mavroudis

Correction: Chip Off the Old Block

In Christopher Hayes's February 16 "100 Days" column, "Never Say You're Sorry," former Senator Paul Sarbanes of Maryland was referred to as Representative Sarbanes, who is the senator's son.

Key to February 2 Cover



1. Barack Obama
2. Michelle Obama
3. Martin Luther King Jr.
4. Thurgood Marshall
5. Rosa Parks
6. Barbara Jordan
7. Cynthia Wesley
8. Carole Robertson
9. Denise McNair
10. Addie Mae Collins
11. Emmett Till
12. Susan B. Anthony
13. C.T. Vivian
14. James Meredith
15. Homer Plessy
16. Harvey Milk
17. Ida B. Wells
18. Malcolm X
19. Bayard Rustin
20. John Lewis
21. Mahatma Gandhi
22. Abraham Lincoln
23. Frederick Douglass
24. Cesar Chavez
25. Sojourner Truth
26. Nelson Mandela
27. Stephen Biko
28. Oliver Brown (*Brown v. Board of Education*)
29. Chief Joseph
30. Lyndon Johnson
31. Medgar Evers
32. Rev. James Reeb
33. Fred Shuttlesworth
34. W.E.B. Du Bois
35. Ralph Abernathy
36. Viola Gregg Liuzzo
37. Marcus Garvey
38. Andrew Goodman
39. James Chaney
40. Michael Schwerner
41. John Brown
42. Jackie Robinson
43. Dolores Huerta
44. Mary White Ovington
45. William Lloyd Garrison
46. Wang Dan
47. Stephen Samuel Wise
48. Harriet Tubman
49. Dred Scott
50. Booker T. Washington
51. David Richmond (*and*)
52. Joseph McNeil (*Greensboro Four*)
53. Martin Delany
54. The Little Rock Nine
55. William Still
56. Thomas Garrett
57. Elizabeth Cady Stanton
58. Samuel Burris
59. Thomas Paine
60. Abigail Kelley Foster
61. Jesse Jackson
62. Eugene V. Debs
63. Lucretia Mott
64. Paul Robeson
65. Henry David Thoreau
66. Shirley Chisholm

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Books & the Arts.

DOUG CHAYKA

An Alienation Artist

by ALEXANDER PROVAN

To write aphorisms is to partake of "a minor art of the intellectual asthma," Austrian author Thomas Bernhard once wrote, "from which certain people, above all in France, have lived and still live, so-called half philosophers for nurses' night tables…whose sayings eventually find their way onto the walls of every dentist's waiting room." The most common complaint among revisionist biographers and doting critics of Franz Kafka is that, in the eighty-odd years since his death, the deification of the writer has reduced his work to the level of the aphorism. If Kafka has not yet found his way onto the walls of every dentist's waiting room, the photograph of his stony countenance and doleful eyes, so frequently invoked as a stand-in for his vision of the world, sometimes seems to be everywhere else, including the cover of novelist Louis Begley's recent book-length biographical essay on Kafka, *The Tremendous World I Have Inside My Head*. His stories are still read widely—less so his novels—but have in the popular imagination been subsumed by a one-word slogan: Kafkaesque. That grainy likeness is its logo.

What is the Kafkaesque? It is the scene described in Kafka's story "A Report to an Academy," in which an eloquent ape candidly recounts his arduous path toward civilization: "There is an excellent idiom: to fight one's way through the thick of things; that is what I have done." It is, Begley suggests, that familiar existential predicament so often played out by Kafka's characters, who "struggle in a maze that sometimes seems to have been designed on purpose to thwart and defeat them. More often, the opposite appears to be true: there is no purpose; the maze simply exists." It is the explosion of the international market for mortgage-backed securities and derivatives, in which value is not attached to the thing itself but to speculation on an invented product tangentially related to (but not really tied to) that thing. It is FEMA's process for granting housing assistance after Hurricane Katrina: victims were routinely informed of their applications' rejection by letters offering not actual explana-

The Tremendous World I Have Inside My Head
Franz Kafka: A Biographical Essay.
By Louis Begley.
Atlas. 221 pp. $22.

Franz Kafka
The Office Writings.
Edited by Stanley Corngold, Jack Greenberg and Benno Wagner.
Princeton. 404 pp. $45.

Amerika
The Missing Person.
By Franz Kafka.
Translated by Mark Harman.
Schocken. 299 pp. $25.

Why You Should Read Kafka Before You Waste Your Life
By James Hawes.
St. Martin's. 244 pp. $23.95.

Alexander Provan, a writer living in Brooklyn, New York, is a founding editor of Triple Canopy.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tions but "reason codes." It is the Bush administration's declaration that certain Guantánamo Bay detainees who had wasted away for years without trial were "no longer enemy combatants" and its simultaneous refusal to release them or clarify whether they had ever been such. It is, as Walter Benjamin wrote, "the form which things assume in oblivion." "Kafkaesque," in other words, is a phrase that has come to represent very much about modern life while signifying very little.

For some, the haze of the Kafkaesque has become so dense—if not Kafkaesque—as to prevent readers from seeing the real Kafka. In his "definitive biography" *Kafka: The Decisive Years*, which was translated from the German in 2005, Reiner Stach assembles the available bits of information about the writer's life between 1910 and 1915 as if they were puzzle pieces, but he finds he has no key, or too many; loath to impose his interpretation of the various facts and accounts (though he must do so occasionally) or to indulge purveyors of the Kafka myth, he leaves the reader with a 600-page buildup to a titular punch line. In *Testaments Betrayed*, Milan Kundera's book on various pre-eminent Modernists, the fellow Czech blames Max Brod, Kafka's friend, biographer and literary executor, for the consecration of Kafka's body of work. Brod hawked Kafka's manuscripts as revelation, going so far as to produce a statement during Hitler's rise to power—signed by Martin Buber, Hermann Hesse and Thomas Mann, among others—imploring publishers to issue Kafka's collected works as "a spiritual act of unusual dimensions, especially now, during times of chaos." The rest is history: "Through innumerable prefaces, postfaces, notes, biographies and monographs, university lectures and dissertations," Kundera writes, "Kafkology produces and sustains its own image of Kafka, to the point where the author whom readers know by the name Kafka is no longer Kafka but the Kafkologized Kafka." Readers should be up in arms, and perhaps the purest among them will storm the local university, where doctoral students are even now producing narrow interpretations of Kafka's work that fixate on middling details of his biography and blow them wildly out of proportion. For Kundera, such blasphemy has turned Kafka into "the patron saint of the neurotic, the depressive, the anorexic, the feeble; the patron saint of the twisted, the *précieuses ridicules*, and the hysterical."

To issue Kafka's collected works, Max Brod felt, would be "a spiritual act of unusual dimensions."

There is comparatively little fodder for Kafkologists in *The Office Writings*, a collection of legal and policy papers penned by Kafka during the fourteen years he labored at the Austrian Workmen's Accident Insurance Institute in Prague. His position at this public company was made possible by what counts, in bureaucracy, as a revolution: the empire-wide compilation of industrial-accident statistics. In a critical essay included in *The Office Writings*, Benno Wagner suggests that the institute was at the crux of a dramatic shift in legal paradigms. Industrial society required that liability and compensation for increasingly regular workplace injuries be standardized, and devising a system to quantify these occurrences meant substituting "the principle of risk" for "the principle of guilt." A certain number of accidents would happen regardless, and it no longer made sense to search out the individuals culpable for each shredded limb or paralyzed breadwinner. Instead of adjudicating each incident, the government distributed risk by collecting insurance premiums from employers. When a worker was mutilated or killed, a trained expert compensated him or his family by referring to an actuarial table of payments.

Working in "the Manchester of the Empire," Kafka proved himself a legal innovator, developing and implementing safety measures and methods of oversight that saved the lives and livelihoods of countless workers. He appealed for the improvement of conditions in quarries, advocated for public assistance to disabled veterans and filed lawsuits against business owners who illegally withheld insurance premiums. And while he complained that the "*real hell is there in the office*" and, in his epistolary exchanges with friends and lovers, fretted constantly about the obstruction to writing posed by his day job, he also admitted the existence of "the deep-seated bureaucrat" inside him. In technical papers like "On the Examination of Firms by Trade Inspectors" and "Measures for Preventing Accidents From Wood-Planing Machines," he surveyed the strange terrain his literary work would excavate.

At the *fin de siècle*, the state bureaucracy already held considerable sway over people's lives and selves, and Kafka wrote from the center of the age's contradictions and anxieties. When he assumed his position at the Insurance Institute in 1908, after having spent a dismal year in the employ of Assicurazioni Generali, an Italian insurer, the Dual Monarchy was groaning under a superabundance of paperwork. Legislation enacted in the 1880s had ushered in the European welfare state, and its administration required a massive expansion and modernization of the notoriously sclerotic royal bureaucracy. By the turn of the century, district authorities were processing four times more paperwork than they had been twenty years earlier; the empire was "being suffocated by files and drowning in ink," wrote the governor of Lower Austria. Meanwhile, the arcane official idiom had become so divorced from vernacular German that the bureaucrats and their charges could hardly communicate. One imagines a cadre of clerks madly dashing off reports and edicts, which would be inevitably eclipsed by newer documents before they arrived at the appropriate filing facility. In Kafka's last, unfinished novel, *The Castle*, this flood of imperial documents has so overwhelmed the citadel that the living rooms of village homes have been turned into storage annexes.

The principal subject of Kafka's novels is not the mess of bureaucracy as such but rather alienation in the age of office jobs, assembly lines and advanced nation-states. Though Begley characterizes Kafka as reliant on fickle inspiration, which only occasionally allowed him unfettered access to what he called his "dreamlike inner life," his best literary creations, like all dreams, are clearly rooted in the everyday. Drawing primarily on Kafka's diary and epistolary exchanges with friends and lovers, Begley arrives at the thesis that his life and work are dominated by dichotomies in his psychological makeup: "between *strach* ('fear' in Czech) and *toucha* ('longing')"; between his Jewishness and his German education and literary influences; between the banality of the working day and the inner maelstrom he set out to harness each night. *The Office Writings*, however, convincingly suggests that his job was also integral to his writing, and that his literary production was not an escape from the alienation of daily life to that "dreamlike inner life" but a striving to reconcile the two.

Of all Kafka's major works, *Amerika: The Missing Person*, his first attempt at a novel, bears the least resemblance to the author's life and contains the least evidence of the personal turmoil Begley takes to be the thread suturing Kafka's biography and books. Kafka started *Amerika* in 1911, only to abandon it in 1914. (Max Brod published an edited version of the incomplete manuscript in 1927, three years after Kafka's death; Mark Harman's adroit new

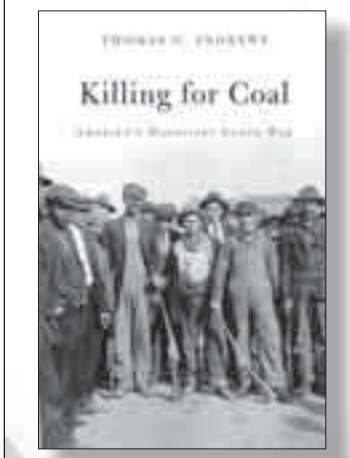
LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

translation is based on the restored text.) The novel chronicles the misadventures of the exiled German teenager Karl Rossmann, cast off across the Atlantic by his parents after a housemaid who seduced him becomes pregnant and bears his child. It is by turns a picaresque narrative, an archetypal immigrant's tale, an epic road story, a bleak vision of city life and a sneering take on the "land of plenty." But though it tracks Karl as he stumbles from job to job, town to town, *Amerika* is not a coming-of-age novel; if anything, it is a parody of the European *Bildungsroman*, with a series of mishaps preventing Karl from becoming anything at all, no matter how he tries. (The nameless protagonist of *Invisible Man* would face similar travails, with comparable results, four decades later.) In this respect Karl is a prototype for Kafka's later protagonists, whose actions never produce the desired results but rather reveal the gulf between intentions and outcomes.

The book opens with a steamer inching toward New York harbor and Karl standing on its deck gazing at the Statue of Liberty: "The arm with the sword now reached aloft, and about her figure blew the free winds." Begley unceremoniously dismisses this substitution of Liberty's torch for a blade as "almost surely" a "slip of the pen." But given that Kafka declined to alter the sentence in the story's second printing, Harman's conjecture in the preface to his translation of *Amerika* is more credible: the sword provides a deliberate alienation effect, immediately placing the promise of America in quotation marks and situating the reader in a slightly disfigured reality, where metaphorical figures become as palpable and unyielding as concrete and steel.

As the ship docks, Karl becomes involved in a dispute between its stoker and his superior. This, in turn, leads him to his long-lost Uncle Jakob, who fled Germany many years ago as a pauper but has since remade himself as a shipping magnate. Jakob takes Karl in, furnishing him with a piano, a new set of clothes, a tutor, riding lessons and a fine desk "such as his father had wanted for years"; the immigrant boy determines that "one could not hope for pity" in America, but for a short while it seems to him that the fortuitous patterning of life unique to the country might elevate him to the ranks of the wealthy few who "seemed to enjoy their good fortune amid the indifferent faces on all sides." In this ambivalent state, Karl regards downtown Manhattan from the balcony of his uncle's elegant apartment, which looks down on a street that is

> filled with constantly bustling traffic, which seen from above seemed like a



Killing for Coal
America's Deadliest Labor War
THOMAS G. ANDREWS

Killing for Coal offers a bold and original perspective on the 1914 Ludlow Massacre and the "Great Coalfield War." In a sweeping story of transformation that begins in the coal beds and culminates with the deadliest strike in American history, Thomas Andrews illuminates the causes and consequences of the militancy that erupted in colliers' strikes over the course of nearly half a century. He reveals a complex world shaped by the connected forces of land, labor, corporate industrialization, and workers' resistance.

Considering issues of social and environmental justice in the context of an economy dependent on fossil fuel, Andrews makes a powerful case for rethinking the relationships that unite and divide workers, consumers, capitalists, and the natural world.

new in cloth

HARVARD UNIVERSITY PRESS
www.hup.harvard.edu

EATING
DRINKING LIBERALLY?
LAUGHING
READING
SCREENING

LIBERALS, YOU ARE NOT ALONE.
DRINKING LIBERALLY CHAPTERS
THRIVE IN MORE THAN 300 CITIES
ACROSS ALL 50 STATES.

NOT IN THE MOOD FOR A DRINK?
JOIN MEALS, COMEDY SHOWS,
BOOK CLUBS, AND FILM SCREENINGS
THROUGH OTHER LIVING LIBERALLY GROUPS.

FIND OR START A CHAPTER TODAY.
LIVINGLIBERALLY.ORG

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

> continually self-replenishing mixture of distorted human figures and of the roofs of all sorts of vehicles, constantly scattered by new arrivals, out of which there arose a new, stronger, wilder mixture of noise, dust, and smells, and, catching and penetrating it all, a powerful light that was continually dispersed, carried away, and avidly refracted by the mass of objects that made such a physical impression on one's dazzled eye that it seemed as if a glass pane, hanging over the street and covering everything, were being smashed again and again with the utmost force.

Before Kafka focused his writing on a specific, native aspect of modernity—the bureaucracy he inhabited—he zeroed in on the Manhattan street scene, where life had been transformed into a blur of speeding machines and spectral selves. Karl is stymied by his first attempt to fathom the city: instead of the boy looking at the skyline as his ship approaches Manhattan, it is the skyline that gazes at Karl "with the hundred thousand windows of its skyscrapers."

It isn't long until Karl is down among the masses, having been abruptly banished by his uncle for a trifling transgression. From that point on, his position in life declines precipitously. He rambles north for a while, joining two immigrants named Delamarche and Robinson until their abuse becomes intolerable; he flees and finds work as an elevator boy in a suburban luxury hotel but is eventually fired and stripped of his dignity on account of a drunken visit by Robinson; he soon finds himself running through an array of tenement towers with the police in pursuit, only to be saved by Delamarche—who immediately imprisons him in an apartment that he and Robinson share with an abominable obese singer named Brunelda, so that Karl may become their servant. The text trails off, picking up again at a putative final chapter in which Karl is seeking employment with the chimerical Nature Theater of Oklahama. By this point he is so abraded by his months in America that he refuses to give his real name, instead identifying himself as "Negro," pleading with the circus's bureaucrats to cart him off to the country's unspoiled, unknown interior.

After a few hundred pages, one gets the sense that Karl's epic journey through the gears of the capitalist machine was perfectly crystallized twenty years later, in Charlie Chaplin's actual journey through the gears of the capitalist machine in *Modern Times*. "It was my intention, as I now see," Kafka wrote in his diary three years after he had stopped working on the book, "to write a Dickens novel, but enhanced by the sharper lights I should have taken from the times and the duller ones I should have gotten from myself." If London was the epicenter of modernity during Dickens's lifetime, the incarnation of its most improbable fantasies and lurid failings, by the turn of the century that place was America. Kafka learned about the country through newspaper accounts, travelogues, lectures, silent films and perhaps, as Harman notes, the autobiography of Benjamin Franklin; accordingly, his description of the country is a sometimes inconsistent, if imaginative, assortment of secondhand details glommed onto Dickensian urban tableaus. Nevertheless, *Amerika* holds within it the basic element of Kafka's greatness, the ability to project the tremendous world inside his head onto the one we know, as if it were a screen fabricated expressly for that purpose. Within that palimpsest the contours of inner exile emerge: the general alienation that was a byproduct of the industrial age; the particular isolation felt by a Goethe-worshiping Jewish writer at a time when Jews were considered incapable of producing great literature in German; and the angst felt by the first generation of cosmopolitan Jewish intellectuals, for whom, Hannah Arendt observed, "all traditions and cultures as well as all 'belonging' had become equally questionable."

Kafka's singular insight was that the "rationalization" of society, with the bureaucracy as its engine, was increasingly shaping individuals and relations between them. His genius was to make this observation into something more than a trope or a theme in his writing, to give this new social force a literary form. Whereas Dickens fought a war against the system—the jaundiced High Court of Chancery in *Bleak House* being the chief battleground—Kafka, knowing there is no other salvation, strove to turn the system on its head, lay bare its operations and have a good laugh at its expense. (*Amerika* is his most Dickensian novel and, as such, suffers from a paucity of good jokes.) Kafka's success in this venture has made his name into an emblem of the confounding, dehumanizing logic of modernity, and plenty of ink has been spilled over why this presents a hazard for his readers.

The preponderance of Begley's book is devoted to a measured account of Kafka's plodding daily life, neurotic tendencies and manic epistolary exchanges, which are by turns monotonous and excruciating, with the reader always left pitying the women on the receiving end. Begley augments his narrative with humble insights, such as, "The claustrophobia of the world portrayed in his fiction mirrors that of his own existence." The point seems to be to satisfy the reader's (and Begley's) natural curiosity but also to quarantine it. This puts Begley in the odd position of writing a biography partly to prove that, when reading Kafka, one should not rely too heavily on biography. If there is a general argument to be gleaned, it is that this grandson of a kosher butcher from the southern Bohemian village of Wossek embodied the anxieties of the age, while his masterful writing universalized them. Kafka's image of the world has persisted because he identified a quintessential quality of society and branded it—with a trial, a castle, a bug, a hunger artist, a penal colony. It would be impolitic to fault Kafka, and thus his readers, for the popularity of his conceits; so Begley dutifully chides the Kafkologists for reading *The Trial* "as a cabalistic parable" and distorting it to fit their "formal literary theory concerns," and for their "near-total disregard of the aesthetic aspect of [Kafka's] work." He then concludes, rather lamely, "Some things cannot be explained."

James Hawes, in his fatuous polemic *Why You Should Read Kafka Before You Waste Your Life*, contends that "the *less* you know about Kafka's alleged life the *greater* chance you have of enjoying his superb writing." All the Kafka you need is in the pages of his books (where Hawes spent many years of his life as a German literature PhD); to look elsewhere only muddles the formal brilliance and psychological acuity of Kafka's work by placing his writing in the service of what Hawes refers to as "the gatekeepers." The "adoring biographers" and "theorizing academics" are all "in the same game as the sellers of tourist knickknacks in Prague."

That resolved, Hawes commences reeducation camp, plowing through 200 pages of biography to show us that no details of Kafka's life are so important as to influence our reading of his books, and because, "being human, we want to find out *who* made things we admire." He reveals that Kafka subscribed to highbrow erotic magazines, was a lifelong vegetarian and adhered to the dietary dictates of the "great masticator" Horace Fletcher, who advised his acolytes to chew each bite until it had been turned to a sort of saliva bisque. Kafka also practiced the calisthenics regime of Jens Peter Müller, "the most beautiful man of the new century," standing nearly naked by his window swinging his arms and legs for ten minutes each day. Hawes seems to think of himself as the

(continued on page 30)

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

BACK TALK

ADRIAN BELLESGUARD

Adam Frank

Adam Frank is an astrophysicist at the University of Rochester. In *The Constant Fire: Beyond the Science vs. Religion Debate* (California; $24.95), he attempts to move past the antagonisms between religious fundamentalists and the New Atheists. Instead of debating the Bible or arguing about the existence of evil, he turns to thinkers like William James, Rudolf Otto and Mircea Eliade for ideas about experience, the sacred, the sublime and hierophanies, manifestations of the sacred in the physical world.

—Christine Smallwood

You use the word "sacred" instead of the word "religion" or "spirituality." What do you mean by that?

If you trace the etymology of "sacred," you'll see it's related to the architecture of Roman temples. The *sacer* was the domain inside the temple, where you met the gods. So the sacred was the inside, and the profane was the outside of the temple, where you sold your walnuts or whatever. It's this sense that we have, that we sometimes encounter—or the sacred erupts into our lives—this sense of the world being wholly other than our profane and everyday experience. You just suddenly notice how weird everything is, or how beautiful.

Can you talk more about what you mean by experience?

As human beings we've always, since the dawn of self-consciousness, had this experience of the world where the sacred appears to us. And earlier civilizations were very close to that experience. Because they felt it as a power in the world, they would create mythic narratives that set themselves into a context in the universe. There would be the myth of the hunt and the rituals of the hunt, and part of those rituals was a kind of science. In hunter-gatherer societies, after the hunt people would take the animal apart and try to put it back together. The cultures that were building the Neolithic astronomical monuments would have very carefully constructed astronomical alignments. But it wasn't just a calendar; it was part of an emotive response to the night sky. So those narratives they told did both.

So narrative is a kind of hierophany?

Yes. In hunter-gatherer societies or any society that was prescientific, myths weren't told all the time. There were special times of year when people would gather and the shaman or priest would recite the origin myth around the fire. And hearing the myths told and the rituals enacted, you were brought back to that time. The individual was meant to participate in the sacred through experience. When I teach Astronomy 101, I always show a movie, a standard program about the birth of the universe. It has cool animation and the music soars, and afterward I ask my students about the music, which is designed to make them respond emotionally.

What of those who might say that emotions are the problem?

That's crazy! That's like saying love is really a problem, so why don't we just have mating behavior. Many of the founders of science were deeply religious. They saw their interest in scientific inquiry as a way of honoring this sense of something more, this unseen order, as William James called it. We should emphasize that aspect. We should show people that science is a hierophany. It's part of a long human tradition of encountering the world through awe and wonder.

But your experience of wonder is built on a lifetime of knowledge, and mine is in large part built on ignorance. Do nonscientists need to learn more about science in order to have a fuller experience of what is sacred or sublime?

Why would you say that? When you walk into a museum—pick a painting you saw that you were really moved by, before you knew any art history, like a Jackson Pollock. If you don't know anything about it, maybe you won't like it, but some people will just be caught up in the movement of the lines. And then you take a class, and your appreciation of it grows. With the Hubble Telescope images—just the colors and the structure—all you know is that this is something that's really big and has been around for a really long time, and in some sense that's all you need to know. It's no different from looking at a sunset and thinking it's beautiful.

What are the most awesome things happening in astrophysics these days?

For me, it is our understanding of planets. The question of whether or not there are planets orbiting other stars is 2,000 years old. And it's been only about a decade since we've answered it. How often do you have a two-millenniums-old question that gets answered? We're learning about additional solar systems and that they're completely different from ours. The ultimate question of whether or not there's life on any of these, we've taken a step toward that. Also, in the past thirty years we've figured out that much of the universe is dark matter [nonluminous mass, the presence of which is inferred from the motion of astronomical objects], and we've also discovered that most of the energy of the universe is in some unseen form called dark energy. If you were to do a census of the universe, you'd find that our kind of stuff, the kind of matter we're made out of and which we can identify, makes up around 3 or 4 percent of the universe. The discovery of the dark universe really raises the issue of our significance. We thought we were the center of the universe, and then we learned we were a planet going around the sun, and then there were lots of suns, and then lots of galaxies. But now, not only is the universe really big and you're really small; you're not even part of the universe. Ninety-seven percent of the universe is this other stuff that has nothing to do with you. Just by calling it dark, really what we're saying is we don't have a clue. And that may mean that fundamentally we're on the edge of something, we're about to reach a breakthrough that may lead to some leap. ■

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

(continued from page 28)

Ernest Renan of Kafka studies, undermining the myth machine with a portrait of "the real Franz Kafka, warts, porn, whores, and all," the one that scholars "don't want *you*, dear Reader, to know."

The myths Hawes aims to debunk include: "Kafka takes us into bizarre worlds"; "Kafka was poor and lonely, or free, and thereby lost"; and "Kafka's works uncannily predict Auschwitz." Our actual world is indeed bizarre enough, and Kafka was probably more uncomfortable in his own skin and surroundings than most, if only because he was so acutely sensitive to them. As for Hawes's last claim, it's necessary to distinguish between work "predicting" and being "predictive of" the Holocaust, and Kafka's writing definitely falls into the latter category. In a late-life letter, Kafka expressed wonder at the bureaucracy's capacity for "the taking of things to a higher level," of enhancements "springing straight out of the origins of human nature, to which, measured by my case, the bureaucracy is closer than any other social institution." To achieve the productivity and expansion necessary to industrial capitalism, individuals were absorbed into massive hierarchies without glimpsing their form or limning their purpose. It was this fusion of bureaucracy, technology and power, mobilized to sinister ends, that laid the tracks, built the camps, circulated the propaganda and processed the paperwork of the Third Reich. In this sense, the Holocaust, too, is Kafkaesque.

Ultimately, the bureaucratization of society establishes order without rationality, speeding the satisfaction of the state's appetites without benefiting the individual. Though Kafka's later protagonists rarely escape with their lives, *Amerika*'s "Negro" (né Karl) is an exception: he ends up on a train headed toward "Oklahama," where he expects a position as a technical worker with the Nature Theater. Only when he is two days removed from the deprivations and indignities of the city, nearing some dimly imagined frontier, does he content himself with gazing out his window at "the vastness of America." He no longer dwells on his prospects or even his destination but rather on the majesty of the land, with its "bluish-black masses of rock" and its "broad mountain rivers" sweeping "forward in great waves." As the distance between him and Gotham grows, and as his contemplation of the erosion and sedimentation of ages sweeps away the memories of tenement towers and luxury hotels, Karl appears to become himself again, the child who approached America and was greeted with Liberty's sword. ■

States of Mind

by NEGAR AZIMI

The Road to Democracy in Iran
By Akbar Ganji.
Boston Review. 113 pp. $14.95.

A History of Iran
Empire of the Mind.
By Michael Axworthy.
Basic. 341 pp. $27.50.

The Quest for Democracy in Iran
A Century of Struggle Against Authoritarian Rule.
By Fakhreddin Azimi.
Harvard. 492 pp. $35.

A History of Modern Iran
By Ervand Abrahamian.
Cambridge. 228 pp. Paper $24.99.

In the world of celebrity dissidents, Akbar Ganji may be Iran's most famous. A slight man with a tuft of hair atop a mostly bald head, he is perhaps best known for the seventy-three-day hunger strike he endured in 2005, near the end of his six-year detention in Tehran's hilltop Evin Prison. Ganji was born in 1960, and like many men and women of his generation, he agitated against Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi from a tender age. After serving in the young Islamic Republic's Revolutionary Guard during the grueling Iran-Iraq war, he served as an attaché at the Iranian Embassy in Turkey, where, among other things, he was encouraged to spy on restive Iranian students in Ankara. But as he journeyed deeper into Iran's political interior, Ganji grew increasingly disenchanted with what this new Islamic Republic had become. The values for which the revolutionaries had ostensibly fought, from freedom of thought and expression to the freedom to participate in fair and transparent elections, had been smothered. More and more, this regime made it clear that it would not tolerate critics.

Ganji eventually left government and became a journalist. By the mid-1990s he was publishing courageous investigative essays in reformist newspapers, *Kiyan* and *Sobh-e Emrooz* the most prominent among them, about the excesses, financial and otherwise, of President Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani's regime. Most notable were Ganji's dispatches about a series of ghastly murders of dissident intellectuals during the presidency of Rafsanjani's successor, the incongruously smile-prone and mild-mannered Mohammad Khatami; Ganji's reporting eventually implicated high-ranking officials within the Ministry of Intelligence and other security agencies.

The state Ganji had once defended with his life locked him up in Evin in 2000 on multiple charges, ranging from spreading propaganda against the Islamic Republic to endangering national security. By the fifth year of his sentence, Ganji was penning what he called letters "to the free people of the world." In the second of these letters, dated July 2005, he referred to the country's all-powerful Supreme Leader Ayatollah Khamenei, who is more or less elected for life, as a sultan, urging him to step down and calling for a new, secular constitution. That same year, Ganji began his stubborn hunger strike, and soon enough images of the rail-thin prisoner on the brink of a premature death, his eyes rolled back into their lids, landed in e-mail accounts worldwide—including my own. His plight was taken up by various crusaders from the international human rights movement, while the coiners of the phrase "axis of evil" anointed him a hero ("America stands by you," at least one Bush-era White House press release declared). Having served his prison sentence, Ganji left Iran in 2006—supposedly for a short trip. He has not returned, instead joining the growing ranks of Iranian dissidents based in think-tank havens like Washington, DC.

Ganji recently published a slim volume born of his time in prison. Immodestly called *The Road to Democracy in Iran*, it opens—chillingly—with the words "Today, June 29, 2005, is the nineteenth day of my second hunger strike." The book is not a collection of prison notes, however, but rather a sketch of a future Iranian state, one that would have the most basic human rights principles at its core. This is not Ganji's first prison manuscript. In 2002 he penned the opening notes of his six-part "Republican Manifesto," in which he lamented the trampling of individual rights in contemporary Iran and made his best case for a secular democracy. Ganji's touchstones are Karl Popper and Immanuel Kant. He may owe more to the Age of Reason than to the Koran.

Like many Iranians of his generation, Ganji was at one time an ardent follower of the late Ali Shariati, a fiery and charismatic figure who put forward a reading of Shiism that evoked Marxism and shades of revolutionary Third Worldism. Shariati flourished in the heady climate of early 1960s Paris, as

Negar Azimi is a senior editor at Bidoun.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

France's turbulent war with its Algerian colony raged. He collaborated with the Algerian National Liberation Front in its revolutionary struggle, was coddled by Marxist scholars, translated Sartre into Farsi and cavorted with Frantz Fanon. He returned to Iran in 1965 and soon thereafter began delivering rousing lectures to budding revolutionaries at Husseinieh-e Ershad, a blue-domed religious institute in central Tehran that has since become inextricably tied to Shariati's image. Shiism, Shariati told his listeners, has a core set of values that stands to resolve many of society's ills. He distinguished this original Shiism from the pernicious faith he saw propagated by the clerics around him, what he contemptuously referred to as "Safavid Shiism," after the Safavids, who established Shiism as Iran's state religion in the sixteenth century. Cassettes of Shariati's lectures were distributed en masse, and Shariati, inadvertently or not, became a primary intellectual architect of the Islamic revolution to come. He was arrested in 1974—accused of being everything from a Wahhabi to a Communist to a SAVAK collaborator. Upon release he traveled to England, where he subsequently died of a heart attack (his supporters believe he was eliminated by the shah's secret police).

The Road to Democracy in Iran testifies to Ganji's movement away from Shariatism toward a firm belief that religion cannot possibly survive as the foundation of a modern democracy. Nor can culturally specific conceptions of rights, whether African, Confucian or Islamic in nature. "We are not relativists," he writes. Rather, a chastened Ganji insists that democracy can only be rooted in a universal recognition of the most basic human rights—perhaps most prominent, the right to shape one's fate. Ganji goes on to ponder the role of the intellectual in bringing about this brave new order ("We must struggle"), but in the same breath he warns that "human rights will not be achieved through academic polemics." He decries the more fundamentalist readings of religion, though he stresses that modernity and religiosity are not mutually exclusive. (Kant's dictum of religion existing only within the confines of reason seems most fitting here.) In one chapter, Ganji singles out for criticism the pains and injuries, both physical and psychological, that women endure in the name of Islamic tradition and history: rape, coerced sexual relations, mandated hijab and even limits on their mobility. Being a Muslim, he insists, "means accepting the essence, and not the historical aspects, of the religion."

Though seductively pithy, Ganji's manifesto occasionally gets bogged down in abstractions, vagaries and clichés. The "West enjoys cultural and spiritual hegemony," he writes in one of many unexplained non sequiturs. Indeed, his habit of invoking clashes between "western civilization" and Islam runs the risk of reinforcing the very polarities he frequently criticizes. He denies that he is an essentialist but then goes on to locate modernity exclusively in the West and reduces Islam to its premodern forms. And though he points out that religion is amenable to myriad interpretations, he doesn't summon any concrete examples of what a progressive Islam could look like.

In one crucial respect, Ganji and the clerics who rule the Islamic Republic today are coevals: both share a firm—and occasionally maddeningly chauvinistic—belief in Iran's unique destiny. "We do not believe that historic change occurs in leaps," Ganji writes. "We must make it clear that we are against war, against foreign intervention in Iran, and against solutions imposed by outsiders." For the clerics, Iran's unique destiny is, at least in part, linked to the country's Islamic lineage. Disenfranchised Iranian monarchists in and around Los Angeles are in the destiny business too: they tend to carry on about how one of the country's first rulers, Darius I, once laid claim to the largest empire the world has known, stretching at its peak from Macedonia into Egypt and east to the Indus River. They point out that despite a procession of Muslim Arab conquests in the seventh century, the Persians managed to hold on to their language, even enjoying a poetry renaissance in the centuries that followed, with Sa'di, Hafez and Rumi among its luminaries. For their part, nationalists of all stripes stress that Iran was the source of one of the most influential critiques of the West—the late twentieth-century intellectual Jalal Al-e Ahmad's concept of *gharbzadegi*, or intoxication with all things Western. Despite their points of divergence, these stories testify to the remarkable endurance of the very idea of Iran, less a cultural, religious or geographical entity than a remarkably resilient state of mind.

HORST FAAS/ASSOCIATED PRESS

Celebrations at Persepolis, Iran, marking the 2,500th anniversary of the founding of the Persian Empire, 1971

In *A History of Iran* Michael Axworthy, a former British Foreign Service officer and the author of a laudable biography of the eighteenth-century Iranian leader Nader Shah (sometimes referred to as the Napoleon of Persia), gallops at a brisk pace through 2,500 years of Iranian history. While the more seasoned Orientalist may swear by Richard Frye's *The Golden Age of Persia* for an authoritative, exhaustive chronicle of Iranian history, Axworthy manages to present a worthwhile introduction to Iran that not only captures the color of its history but also avoids the sweeping generalizations that mark much work on the Middle East. And though his voice can grow pedantic or tiresomely corrective at times—presumably because he assumes the worst of the Western reader, who may know precious little about Iran beyond the well-documented rants of its current president or, say, allegations surrounding its nefarious nuclear ambitions—his account of Iran manages to be a productively nuanced one.

Axworthy begins on the Russian steppes, where the Medes and the Persians lived off the inhospitably rugged land, battled the neighboring Assyrians and finally cobbled together an independent state that would become the basis for modern-day Iran. His

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tour d'horizon ends with a passing mention of President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad's ongoing dispute with the United States and other former great powers over nuclear weapons. Occasionally, Axworthy's treatment is uneven (perhaps betraying the interests of an old Foreign Service hand). He devotes many pages, for example, to the Safavids, who ruled Iran from the fifteenth to the eighteenth century from their splendid blue-tiled capital at Isfahan, while giving short shrift to some of Iran's most influential twentieth-century thinkers, such as Shariati, Al-e Ahmad and Ahmad Kasravi, a nationalist turned critic of the clergy. But Axworthy does manage to recount a number of good stories, for Iranian history is thickly littered with the stuff of the best pulp fiction: madmen, feuding families, leaders with legendary sexual fetishes. There is Nader Shah, who in his delusional last years grew convinced that he could conquer the far-stronger Ottomans next door: in the end, his men burst into his harem while he was sleeping and cut off his arm and head. There was, too, an eighteenth-century ruler named Agha Mohammad Khan. Castrated at age 5 or 6 by a rival family, he grew to be a fierce warrior who happened to have a predilection for fine jewels.

For Mohammad Reza Shah, his people were an afterthought—immature, unruly and fickle.

From the third through the seventh centuries, Iran under the Sassanids—the final Iranian empire before the coming of the Arabs—was a place of extraordinary treasures. The Sassanid ruler Khosraw sponsored the translation of philosophical and literary texts from Indian languages, Greek and Syriac into Persian. The Zoroastrian religion, today perhaps most readily associated with Freddie Mercury, was thriving. Khosraw also commissioned the compilation of Persian history records and even presided over the drafting of an impressive astronomical almanac. When Islam came around from the Arabian Peninsula in the seventh century, the relationship between this syncretic Iranian culture and an Arab one proved dynamic. The influence of the Sassanids on the Arab Abbasid Empire, for example, was important—whether manifested in the form of administrative models or monumental architecture. Persians even served in the court of the Abbasids in their capital in Baghdad, while some of the more innovative interpretations of Islam were born at this time, influenced in large part by Iranian thinkers. As Axworthy notes, even as late as the fourteenth century, the great North African polymath and traveler Ibn Khaldun observed that the most important *hadith* scholars (those who study the words of the Prophet) were Persians working in the Arabic language.

In accounting for the famed Iranian distaste for foreign meddling, Axworthy focuses on several episodes. He recounts tales of the Russians and the Persians feuding over competing claims to neighboring Georgia, a part of the Persian Empire for many years. We also learn of an Iranian revolt following an exceedingly generous tobacco concession to the British in 1890: Nasser al-Din Shah, the first modern Persian monarch to visit Europe, handed the British exclusive rights to produce, sell and export Iranian tobacco. (Britain's commercial stake in Iran dates back to at least 1800, when the crown anxiously dispatched the East India Company to Iran just as Napoleon invaded nearby Egypt, nervous that the French monarch might extend the reach of his Eastern holdings.) Bazaars all over the country shut in protest; in 1891 demonstrators revolted in the traditionally protest-prone northeastern city Tabriz, and finally an esteemed ayatollah named Mirza Hasan Shirazi issued a fatwa against tobacco use from his seat in Samarra. It is said that even the Shah's wives in his overfull harem ceased their smoking as a result. The tobacco revolt, in all its forms, is often understood as one of the harbingers of the Constitutional Revolution of 1905.

Among the country's twentieth-century political leaders, it is Prime Minister Mohammad Mossadegh whose story Axworthy lingers over the most, emphasizing that his sorry fate provides critical insight into Iranians' current sensitivities to the West. In 1951 Mossadegh declared his intention to nationalize Iran's vast oil reserves, sending its British and American patrons into a panic that culminated in a CIA-orchestrated coup in 1953, the bitter memory of which lingers to this day. It is not a stretch to ponder the ill-fated prime minister's influence on Egyptian nationalist Gamal Abdel Nasser some years later, as he lay claim to the Suez Canal, or even on Ahmadinejad, who before the United Nations General Assembly this past fall announced that the American Empire was "reaching the end of its road."

Axworthy depicts Mohammad Reza Shah, Mossadegh's successor, as the most unsubtle of American puppets. The vain Swiss-educated king had embarrassingly epicurean tastes, often traveled around the country by helicopter and encouraged his closest aides—even his prime minister—to kiss the back of his finely manicured hand in public. His delusions of grandeur were epic. In 1971, on the 2,500th anniversary of the Persian Empire, he hosted an extravagant party on the grounds of Persepolis for a smattering of world leaders and celebrities, from Yugoslavia's Tito to Imelda and Ferdinand Marcos of the Philippines. Organizers imported special trees and plants from Paris, Maxim's prepared the banquet and Lanvin designed the court's imperial uniforms, complete with fanciful epaulets. The shah was so insistent on privileging royalty in this lavish pageant that while Haile Selassie got prized seating, Georges Pompidou was left with second-rate placement (upon learning of the situation, he sent his prime minister in his stead). The entire affair cost an estimated $200 million (the shah's court insisted that it was a more modest sum). Axworthy also reminds us of the iconic image taken six years later of the shah, while paying a visit to President Carter, wiping his eyes as tear gas is used to dispel demonstrators protesting his reign outside the White House gates, most of them Iranian university students studying in the United States. That image, arresting as it was, offered an unforgettable glimpse of the impossibly vast gap between the leader and his populace that would ultimately spell his demise.

In the scrum of punditry about the democracy deficit in the contemporary Middle East, precious little attention is paid to Iran's Constitutional Revolution (1905–11), which, in addition to ushering in a constitution, brought with it a parliament and the country's first checks on monarchical rule. Although some years before, in the 1870s in Turkey, a group called the Young Ottomans had established a sort of national assembly in hopes of making the Ottoman Empire into something resembling a constitutional monarchy, that experiment died after only a few years. The Iranian Constitutional Revolution would have far longer-lasting effects.

Two recently published books, *The Quest for Democracy in Iran*, by Fakhreddin Azimi, and *A History of Modern Iran*, by Ervand Abrahamian, portray the 1905 revolution as the natural outcome of years of successive rulers pandering to the West while paying little heed to their populations at home. The humiliation born of Iranian military defeats at the hands of the Russians and the British, amid a Great Game that rendered Iran little more than a piece on the chessboard of Europeans, was not insignificant. For Azimi, a professor of history at the University of Con-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

necticut (and no relation to the author of this review), all Iranian history after 1905 is an attempt to fulfill, partially accommodate or circumvent the ideals of a constitutional movement that placed popular representation at the fore of its priorities. He traces how at various moments public alienation and resentment have been articulated or expressed and finally, how "a culture of confrontation" emerged. His book goes a long way toward recuperating a history of Iranian democracy that has been expunged by Orientalists who wonder aloud if there is something about Muslim lands that makes them inhospitable to democracy or, alternatively, those who have dismissed periods of hectic parliamentary activity as mere chaos.

During the nineteenth century, Iran stagnated under the nepotistic Qajar clan. Vastly out of touch with their population, these hereditary rulers invested little in the country—most of which was rural or pastoral. They ruled through favoritism, bribery and endemic corruption. The Qajars took lavish European trips while the Russians and the British exercised power over the country's natural resources. The 1872 Reuter Concession, which gave the British extensive rights to Iranian natural resources, was, like the concession to the British for tobacco some years later, widely opposed. Slowly, large segments of the population grew emboldened, especially as the Qajar rulers proved incapable of meeting the most basic demands: Iranians' control over their land and a modicum of popular representation.

In 1905 two respected members of the Tehran bazaar were bastinadoed at the order of the governor of Tehran. Their crime was overcharging for sugar. The bazaar shut down after protesters occupied it out of solidarity with the merchants. Led by two clerics, Sayyed Abdallah Behbehani and Sayyed Muhammad Tabatabai, the protesters next sought sanctuary in the shrine of Shah Abd ol-Azim, south of Tehran, and later in the garden of the British legation north of Tehran. The assembled, estimated at 14,000 strong, issued a series of demands, among them the removal of the country's Belgian customs chief. Importantly, the garden was also where protesters made their first demands for a representative house—what they termed a House of Justice.

From there, reformist thinkers, members of the clergy, religious minorities, men and women alike all played a role in a nascent constitutional movement in progress. By August 1906 the increasingly disempowered Qajar ruler, Muzaffar al-Din Shah, caved in to demands for what would become Iran's first parliament. By October of that year an elected assembly convened and drew up a constitution that provided for strict limitations on royal power, an elected European-style parliament with a *Majlis-i Shawra-yi Milli* (National Consultative Assembly), along with a cabinet subject to confirmation by the Majlis. The shah signed the constitution on December 30, 1906, and died five days later. The 1906 constitution curtailed the powers of the shah and his ministers, granted limited suffrage to adult men and guaranteed a significant degree of freedom of the press.

Enter the Pahlavis, who supplanted the Qajars as Iran's ruling family some two decades later. Azimi's account of gruff Reza Khan, a member of the Cossack brigade who engineered a coup with the aid of 3,000 men and eighteen machine guns, reads like a nineteenth-century Russian novel. Now at the helm, Khan rechristened himself Pahlavi, after the name of the ancient pre-Islamic language that would become modern Persian. He was Iran's very own Atatürk. Though uneducated and of modest stock, he fashioned a modern, centralized bureaucratic state, built up an impressive army, launched a national university system and even went so far as to ban visible signs of traditional life—from head scarves to tribal clothing—in his ardent quest to catapult Iran into the modern age. It was only when he flirted with Nazi Germany that a joint Anglo-Soviet invasion in 1941 replaced him with his son, for the British and Russians were keen on preserving their access to Iran's oil reserves and its critical land corridor. From Azimi we learn a great deal about the nature of governance under the last shah, Reza Khan's son: the court as a theater of deference, cultivated opportunism and duplicity. As the country became a dumping ground for foreign goods and a playground for their manufacturers, Iranians at the bottom of the social ladder suffered. The shah, intensely paranoid, considered some of his ministers his enemies. His own people—immature, unruly, fickle—were an afterthought. Vain and self-obsessed, he was the head of the regime but also its Achilles' heel.

Abrahamian, a professor of history at the City University of New York, does an impressive job of recounting the story of the White Revolution, this last shah's botched attempt at modernization via a series of broad-ranging economic and social reforms in 1963. Though the reforms, from the redistribution of lands held by traditional elites to extending the right to vote to women, were designed to pre-empt a red revolution, they oddly paved the way for an Islamic revolution. Many of those who lost their traditional livelihoods in the land-redistribution schemes ended up in the cities, contributing to the birth of a

The Nation
Save the Date
The Nation invites you to join us for our 12th Annual Seminar Cruise to the Caribbean
December 12-19, 2009
For more information or to book your cruise:
www.nationcruise.com
(888) 833-4339
groups@the-cruise-authority.com

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

vast underclass. The clergy, too, were unhappy, as many from their ranks had depended on religious endowments based on landownership for their livelihoods. Some were displeased that women had been afforded the right to vote, while others complained that Iran would be subject to greater foreign influence with these reforms. In 1963 a 61-year-old contrarian cleric named Ayatollah Khomeini was placed under house arrest for publicly criticizing the White Revolution. The shah, it seems, was also unaware that rapid modernization would bring with it a set of fresh demands from the populace. He could not, and simply did not, keep up. Reading Abrahamian, one gains an acute sense of the potent cocktail of factors that finally led to the regime's collapse.

It is Azimi who is best on Iran's past decade, tracing the failures of a reform movement that came of age under former President Khatami in the 1990s, its inability to meet the demands of the chorus of women and young people who voted him into office. The reformers' exalted slogans about civil society, human rights and liberalism grew increasingly anemic, painfully out of step with more pressing needs. Suddenly, the ascendance of the plain-speaking neo-Khomeinist Ahmadinejad starts to make sense. Ahmadinejad's impressively staged campaign films depicting himself as a man of the people (one features him spinning about confusedly in Tehran's baroque mayoral mansion when he was serving as the city's mayor, climaxing with his refusal to live there and his return to his humble home in north Tehran); his narratives about the urgent need to redistribute wealth; and his many trips to far-flung villages throughout the country to open hospitals, cut ribbons at schools and memorialize the occasional martyr all seem seductive, if not sheer marketing genius. But still, just as Tocqueville predicted in the context of another popular revolution, the postrevolutionary state ends up as tightfisted as its predecessor and as mired in clan politics, clientelism and corruption.

In just 100 years, Iran's population has shot up to 69 million, from fewer than 12 million. And Tehran, once a sleepy capital of 200,000, is today an overcrowded, hyperpolluted steel and concrete metropolis of 6.5 million. At the turn of the nineteenth century, one foreign observer wrote of Iran, "There are no cities in Persia, and likewise no slums; no steam driven industries, and therefore none of the mechanical tyranny that deadens the brain, starves the heart, wearies bodies and mind with its monotony." Indeed, in those days the average Iranian's greatest fears were likely to include highway robbers, famine, pestilence, disease and jinn. Today fears are more likely to be kindled by rising unemployment, double-digit inflation, the pressure to get into college or American saber-rattling.

Azimi's book is a thinly veiled call for those millions of Iranians to revisit the central ideas of the 1905 Constitutional Revolution. But such a call should not, he implies, be linked to Americanization, narratives about the end of history or blanket neoliberalism. He is quick to remind us that the Iranian people have risen to the occasion of instigating two street revolutions in the last century. Here, on the thirtieth anniversary of the fall of Pahlavi's peacock regime, it may be useful to remember that both of these revolutions were, in large part, a response to foreign meddling—the culmination of years of Iranian insistence that the idea of Iran, ethereal as it is, is one well worth fighting for. ■

The Human Metaphor

by BARRY SCHWABSKY

Once upon a time it seemed obvious that the future of painting lay in abstraction and that representation was becoming a thing of the past. Today it's abstraction that has been eclipsed. And yet it would be misleading to say that representation, in the sense that was developed in the Renaissance and remained the standard for European painting until Modernism, has made a comeback. One no longer paints from life but from images; the problem is no longer how to reconstruct the visual effect of three-dimensional volumes in space on a two-dimensional surface but rather how to translate a relatively light and consumable image into one that is materially and psychologically much denser and more durable.

In the 1960s, painters like Gerhard Richter, Vija Celmins and Malcolm Morley, among others, tried to attack the issue by painting the "look" of the photographic image. Today their successors are more likely to work from photographic sources by rendering them with a loose and painterly facture that blatantly plays up the differences between photographic and painted images. In great part, this is because of the influence of the Amsterdam-based, Cape Town–born artist Marlene Dumas, whose first mature works date from around 1984 but who began to accrue a big international reputation in the '90s. Her retrospective, "Measuring Your Own Grave," curated by Cornelia Butler, is on view at the Museum of Modern Art through February 16. The exhibition, which was previously shown at the Museum of Contemporary Art in Los Angeles, will be at the Menil Collection in Houston from March 27 to June 21.

Dumas is entirely a painter of people. You won't find landscapes, still lifes or other motifs in her exhibition—hardly even as background to her figures. Occasionally there is a vaguely adumbrated interior. All her attention is on the figure, or sometimes just the face. And although Dumas keeps up the great Dutch tradition of group portraiture with a number of impressive multifigure compositions like *The Turkish Schoolgirls* (1987), as well as others that are not here, unfortunately a pair of unusually weak group portraits from 1997, *Colorfields* and *Ryman's Brides*, have been chosen instead. Dumas also likes to tweak the conventions of group portraiture by depicting her groups from behind, though none of those paintings are at MoMA—look in the catalog for *Group Show* (1993) and the *The Visitor* (1995) as good examples. But mostly she sticks to the formula of one canvas (or sheet of paper) equals one person. Dumas treats her subjects as if she didn't notice anyone else in the room, or the room itself. For the most part, this exclusivity of focus flatters her usually anonymous subjects: it doesn't idealize or beautify them, but it underlines their importance.

Because one's engagement with the painting becomes so exclusively a focus on a single body or head, its surroundings fade into insignificance—and so do the limits of the rectangle on which it appears. The individual takes on the grandeur of a whole world. But the intensity of attention that is the hallmark of Dumas's approach to the figure is really an intensity of imagination, of invention—not of observation. "You can't TAKE a painting," she has written. "You MAKE a painting." To the extent that her work represents a sort of *paragone* between painting and photography, the vindication of her preferred medium rides on her ability to use the tactile variousness of paint to invest the image with more life, though one of an uncanny and finally inexplicable sort. "Painting increases the animation and multifaceted character of its model," as Richard Shiff puts it in his catalog essay. Strangely, this is true

Barry Schwabsky, an American art critic and poet living in London, is Senior Critic in Sculpture at Yale University School of Art.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

even when the subject is a corpse. Not that Dumas uses painting to magically reanimate the dead; rather, in a painting like the ghoulish *Dead Marilyn* (2008), she gives death itself an uncanny energy through the vigor, urgency and brutal contrariness of her mark-making. That's what justifies her in saying, "I am an artist who uses secondhand images and firsthand experiences."

It may be typical of Dumas's paintings to show a single figure, but it wouldn't be quite correct to say the figure is typically alone. It's just that the other person is not in the picture—this person being, of course, the viewer, who was in the first instance the photographer. The people Dumas paints are rarely engaged in any activity except showing themselves. They are posing; they open themselves to the gaze. They are never taken unawares. No wonder Dumas is drawn to prostitutes and to pornography for her subject matter. But her fascination with the act of posing only makes those of her paintings that are based on unposed photographs seem all the more poignant: paintings of the dead, of sleepers and of infants—subjects with whom there's no question of playing to the camera. (In this regard, the toddlers Dumas also likes to paint have already lost their innocence; even so young, one already knows how to pose.)

In the pose, Dumas's idiomatic distinction between "taking" a picture and "making" one is dissolved: the subject collaborates in the production of his or her image. It's only when the pose is absent that the image can truly be said to have been taken. By the same token, these "taken" images are among those that seem to challenge Dumas to an even more heightened intensity of making. They're not necessarily better paintings, but they give a greater sense of the painter's struggle with her material. Her other subjects' poses are often seductive, and she can make immensely seductive paintings out of them, paintings in which the fluency of the brush conjures up a sensual immediacy that few other contemporary painters can match. But with more recalcitrant material, Dumas digs into the image in a different way—less pleasurably, perhaps, but with an impressive insistence.

What the paintings don't get from their photographic sources is detail, above all that sort of random, unforeseeable detail that Roland Barthes famously called the "punctum" of the photograph, "that accident which pricks me…bruises me." Undoubtedly the photos Dumas chooses have such an effect on her, but in being painted they change. Turning the image into a map for the movements of her brush, Dumas generalizes the bodies and faces she paints. That doesn't mean she loses the specific character or attitude that individualizes each one; rather, she omits nearly everything but that. And this is what makes the paintings so touching. The contributors to the catalog are a little too caught up, for my taste, in the exercise of comparing the paintings to their source photographs—an exercise whose main value is to confirm the photographs' final irrelevance to any appreciation of the paintings' specificity as such. But Shiff makes an interesting point in talking about the source for the painting *Jen* (2005), which shows, from an eccentric angle, the head and breast of a sleeping woman (but whom one might easily have imagined to be dead). "One aspect of the source photograph that attracted the painter is far more idiosyncratic than intimations of sleep or death: Dumas noticed how the photographic perspective had set the woman's nipple extremely close to her face, and she even wondered whether the real nipple was not anatomically displaced (rather than merely appearing so)." This apparent displacement is obviously the site of the photograph's punctum. What the painting absolutely doesn't provoke is that question about what is real and what appears so. The structure of the painting produces a formal equivalence of part to part, so that the nipple, nearly black though saturated with red, the focal point of the painting, nonetheless strikes the viewer as essentially a concentration of the reddish-gray murk of its background—which is to say that the painting undoes its own implicit hierarchy of attention. That's why the painting as a whole—rather than just the figure it depicts—conveys a terrible vulnerability. Dumas speaks of empathy as the aim of her work; a painting like *Jen* achieves it with understated force.

THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

Jen (2005), by Marlene Dumas

Like Dumas, Barkley Hendricks is a painter who has asserted the human metaphor in art. Unlike her, he has not been taken up by the international art market or, although he has a substantial exhibition history, by the mainstream New York art world—though on the strength of his current exhibition, "Birth of the Cool," that is likely to change. The exhibition, curated by Trevor Schoonmaker, is at the Studio Museum in Harlem through March 15. Having previously been seen at the Nasher Museum of Art at Duke University, it will be on view at the Santa Monica Museum of Art from May 16 to August 22; the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts in Philadelphia, October 17–January 3, 2010; and the Contemporary Arts Museum in Houston, January 30–April 18, 2010.

I became aware of Hendricks in 1994, when three of his paintings from the 1970s were included in the much criticized exhibition "Black Male: Representations of Masculinity in Contemporary American Art" at the Whitney Museum. Those paintings, like the ones that dominate "Birth of the Cool," are grand-scale, sometimes larger than life, highly detailed portraits of people whose full-length figures are crisply silhouetted against a monochromatic background to lend them a minimalist graphic force. Each is a character in an almost linguistic sense. Reviewing "Black Male" in the *New York Times*, Michael Kimmelman emphasized the unfamiliarity of Hendricks's work, finding it to be among the show's highlights. "Black Male" was curated by Thelma Golden, who is director of the Studio Museum. Golden's loyalty to Hendricks is a good reminder of why, after a couple of decades in which the adjective "international" has been about the most glamorous word in the vocabulary of art, we need institutions with such seemingly parochial missions as black artists or American art. Giving international stars a monopoly on our serious attention might have meant ignoring an artist as interesting as Hendricks, who might have seemed too much of a traditionalist to be fully accept-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Middlebury

The Middlebury Fellowships in Environmental Journalism

Bill McKibben, *Director*

The Middlebury Fellowships in Environmental Journalism each year takes 10 journalists near the start of their careers and helps them work through an ambitious reporting project in print, Web-based, or radio journalism. Fellows meet together twice during the year, once in the fall at the Bread Loaf campus of Middlebury College, in Vermont, and once in the spring at the Monterey Institute for International Studies, in California. At these meetings professional journalists help participants plan their reporting and shape their stories. Each fellow receives $10,000 to help with reporting and living expenses during the fellowship year.

We interpret the environment broadly. Reporting projects dealing with economics, culture, global issues, and the like are fine, as long as they center in some way on the human relationship with the physical world. Deadlines for applications will be May 15, 2009. Interested applicants should visit www.middlebury.edu\administration\enviro\fellowship, or write:

Christopher Shaw, *Associate Director*
Middlebury Fellowships in Environmental Journalism
Middlebury College, Middlebury, VT 05753
cshaw@middlebury.edu

PROGRESSIVE ECONOMIC PRINCIPLES

INSIGHT IN A 20 MINUTE READ WITH THE SOLUTION TO OUR FINANCIAL CRISIS

WWW.ECONOMICSFORDEMOCRATS.COM

Cat Lovers Against the Bomb

2009 Wall Calendar

$8.95 US/Canada + $1.75 postage

Published by Nebraskans for Peace

Order from: CLAB NATION
P.O. Box 83466, Lincoln, NE 68501
Toll free: (877) 778-3434 • fax: (402) 483-4108
e-mail: catcal@aol.com

European Beret $14

100% Wool • One Size Fits All
Black, Navy, Brown, Red, Camel, Grey
Check or Credit Card w/Exp. Date.
Add $2 shipping plus $1 each additional
www.johnhelmer.com

John Helmer • Est. 1921 • (503) 223-4976
969 S.W. Broadway, Dept. TN128 • Portland, OR 97205

ed, too involved with representation in the pre-Modernist sense. Certainly his education at the Pennsylvania Academy, a bastion of realism, would have oriented him in that direction, as would the fact that when he went on to Yale to get an MFA his mentor was the earnest, backward-looking Bernard Chaet. Though Hendricks is also a photographer, his painting is not essentially oriented toward the changes in perception wrought by photography. His most striking work is concerned with the attempt to sustain high-style portraiture—a tradition that went out with John Singer Sargent—in the present. But what's clear is Hendricks's realization that, for this genre to be kept up, it would have to be thoroughly transformed.

Most postwar artists, American or European, would have found it impossible to undertake this kind of painting in good faith. In attempting to do so, Hendricks's only credible immediate precursor would have been Alex Katz. As Katz once put it to me, "There are hardly any painters since the Impressionists who have really refused transcendental subject matter, whether it be mythological or existential or something else—it's all subject-matter art. And people think it's serious. But if you deal with an optical or social world, people think it's not serious." Perhaps the crucial issue was art's autonomy. High-style portraiture became nearly unthinkable because of its dependence on a form of patronage that had long since lost any legitimacy. Katz bypassed the problem by taking his family and friends—poets like Frank O'Hara, dancers like Paul Taylor—as his subjects, thereby reaffirming the myth of the artist. For Hendricks, painting acquaintances in the African-American community in the wake of the Black Power movement and the proclamation that "black is beautiful," on the other hand, the essence of his portraiture would seem to be an assertion of a politics of style, one he clearly shared wholeheartedly. His subjects' swagger and flourish convey a sense of ingrained nobility as convincing as that of the earls and duchesses painted by van Dyck or Gainsborough—more convincing, really, as soon as one reflects that, unlike the court painters of old, this artist's flattery had not been bought, and his subjects had achieved their dignity in the teeth of a system of caste and class that was built to grind them down.

This fascination with style, with attitude, is already present in *My Black Nun*, an early student work dated to 1964, when Hendricks was just 19. Except for the fact that it is a portrait, albeit an imaginary one, it has almost nothing in common with the painter's later work—except that it shows blackness, not so much as a biological given but as a manner of projecting one's image in the world. This is one tough sister, and her sassy, cross-armed stance effectively *détournes* the habit that is supposed to remove her from worldly concerns. In the large-scale portraits from the late '60s through the late '70s that make up the bulk of "Birth of the Cool," this intensely stylized self-presentation becomes not merely the subject but the content of Hendricks's art. The emphatic presence of the painting is completely identified with that of the person pictured in it. Style, here, may have to do with the impressively inventive approach to dress manifested by the subjects of paintings such as *George Jules Taylor* (1972) or *Bahsir (Robert Gowens)*, from 1975—one of several paintings here that productively take up Katz's device of peopling a painting with multiple avatars of the same figure (consider, for instance, the elder artist's sixfold portrait of his wife, Ada, in *The Black Dress*, from 1960). Bahsir's striking get-up, which in the catalog Richard Powell aptly sums up as "part Superfly, part reminiscent of the male Hasidic uniform, entirely self-concocted," is offset by a distinct sense of reserve, the projection of an inner distance that simultaneously contrasts with and justifies his visual flamboyance. But clothes are optional to Hendricks's modern dandies. The sense of style is already there in the stance of a nude, in one's way of wearing the body, for instance in *Brilliantly Endowed (Self-Portrait)*, from 1977 (its title a double entendre on the possibly unwelcome praise the conservative *New York Times* critic Hilton Kramer had paid Hendricks in a review that year).

"Birth of the Cool" includes only a few examples of Hendricks's portraiture from the early '80s and then again the early 2000s, but they are enough to suggest that his work in this genre eventually lost its focus. The show skips 1984–99 entirely. The best of the recent works are small-scaled landscapes of Jamaica, often tondos or ovals, which one would hardly recognize as being by the same artist as the imposing portraits of the '70s. There is an eerie calm about the landscapes; they seem to gather within themselves more space than their modest dimensions should be able to bear. These seemingly delicate yet powerfully built paintings deserve a closer look than an exhibition so focused on Hendricks's eye-catching portraits can easily allow them. They are just as ambitious, but their ambition is no longer focused on the social world as a completely sufficient subject matter. They suggest that we are just beginning to see what this artist can do. ■

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Classified

While we reserve the right to edit, reject or reclassify any advertisement, The Nation *wishes its readers to know we don't have the facilities to check the promises made by our advertisers, and we have a strong presumption against censoring any advertisement, especially if we disagree with its politics. To advertise, contact amanda@thenation.com or call (212) 209-5414. Mail inquiries to* The Nation *Classified Department, 33 Irving Place, New York, NY 10003.*

BLOGS/WEB

READ UP-TO-THE-MINUTE NEWS. Politics, business, travel, political blogs, celebrity news, bios…more. jonesnyhistory.com; famouswelsh.com.

BOOKS

MONIQUE'S FOOT SERVANT. Erotica/romance. He was her foot slave but became her lover. footslavebooks.com.

THE PURPOSE OF LIFE is to live it, and here is how: www.findthepurposeoflife.com; (888) 280-7715.

DOSTOYEVSKY AND DA VINCI understood that the key to Jesus is in John, the gospel that can humanize him or tragically breed anti-Semitism. morganibarra.com.

DR. LUMUMBA'S DREAM OF INCEST. A new twist on a touchy subject. (888) 280-7715. Also available at Amazon.com.

GOURMET FOOD

REDUCE YOUR DEPENDENCE ON FOREIGN OIL. Fresh California certified olive oil. westcoastproducts.net. Specialty olives and olive oils since 1937. Orland, California.

LIBERAL LIAISONS

If responding to a Nation Box number, send replies to: Nation Box ___ , The Nation, 33 Irving Place, New York, NY 10003.

GREENSINGLES.COM—free photo ads for progressive singles in the environmental, vegetarian and animal rights communities. Searchable listings for friendship, dating, marriage. Since 1985. greensingles.com.

FETISHES AND FANTASIES fulfilled. Hot erotic talk with creative, sensuous woman. No limits. Personal, confidential. Call (866) 844-8286.

MATURE, INTELLIGENT CONVERSATION. Erotic, imaginative, independently operated. www.missaria.com. (866) 454-3763.

AURAL EROTICA. Well heeled, well spoken, not always well behaved. Fetish friendly, smart & sexy. (800) 717-LIZZ (5499); ElizabethPaxton.com.

SWM. Young 60s. Unused. Progressive, working class, environmentalist. Would be good mate for honest SWF for LTR and/or family. Reply Nation Box 465.

PRISON PICASSO. 48, nonviolent marijuana farmer. Seeks progressive Frida/O'Keeffe for correspondence. James Moore Jr., 03891-180/B-53, PO Box 9000, FCI, Seagonville, TX 75159-9000. myspace.com/jimmyrasta.

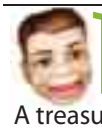
LITERARY SERVICES

RESEARCH, WRITING, EDITING. Write Away Consulting Inc. writeaway@nycap.rr.com. (518) 435-1690. Professional, thorough, timely.

MERCHANDISE

CAT LOVERS AGAINST THE BOMB 2009 wall calendar $8.95 + $1.75 postage. Cats & peace—what more could you want in a calendar? Order from: CLAB-NC, Box 83466, Lincoln, NE 68501, or toll free (877) 778-3434, or catcal@aol.com.

MERCHANDISE



EXPRESS YOURSELF! Stickers, shirts, buttons, emblems and more—www.evolvefish.com. (800) 386-5846 for catalog or to order now.

SUPPORT *THE NATION* AND OUR NATION! Shop online at www.thenationmart.com and exercise subtle and not-so-subtle dissent. Most items are union-made. Great gifts!

OBAMA VICTORY POSTER
Features 50 historic front pages. **Just $11.00**
FrontPageObama.com

CHECK OUT 401BROKE.COM. 401(k) or 403(b) in the dumps? Spend what's left on some funny, affordable gifts.

MUSIC

SUPPORT MUSICIANS DURING RECESSION! *Patience Gloria* album available on Amazon and iTunes. We need your support!

POSITIONS AVAILABLE

DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR AT ACLU OF NEVADA. Assume leadership role in ACLU-NV's fundraising, membership, events and grant-writing programs. Applications accepted until position filled. Contact aclunv@aclunv.org or (702) 366-1536 for details.

SOCIAL CHANGE JOBS. Weekly employment bulletin *Changeworks* (v2.0) covers progressive organizations across USA. Free sampling of job listings from latest issues at changeworks.org. (866) 276-7201.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED to teach English or computer skills, or help manage office of small, friendly nonprofit serving adult immigrants in Manhattan. Evening hours. Spanish a plus, but not required. Contact Centro de Educación de Trabajadores at info@centronyc.org; or go tocentronyc.org.

PSYCHOTHERAPY

PAUL STEIN, PhD. Psychotherapy (Jung's approach), relationship(s). Initial consult no charge. NYC office or phone work. (646) 709-8634.

CHICAGO PSYCHOTHERAPIST, twenty-five years, all issues including depression, anxiety, relationships. From concerns of lawyers, academics and office workers to artists and students. Sliding scale, insurance. Deborah Hellerstein, PhD, (312) 409-9516.

REAL ESTATE

SANTA FE. Progressive Realtor® seeks same in clients. Peter Kahn, Santa Fe Realty Properties. (877) 982-6207 toll free; (505) 946-2254 direct; or pkahn@sfrp.com.

LEFT COAST, US. Work with The Realtor Who's on Your Side. Norma J.F. Harrison. (510) 526-3968. (866) 264-9029. NormaHa@pacbell.net.

TRAVEL

SMALL, EXCLUSIVE, IN-DEPTH TOUR TO EGYPT. November 3–16. Inquire for details: mm@jbatravel.com; (866) 740-1087.

ARE YOU LOOKING FOR A NEW EXPERIENCE? Come & visit us. WildBurroRescue.org.

Events

NATIONAL

Black Women & the Radical Tradition

■ Featuring Angela Davis, Manning Marable, Kathleen Cleaver, Bill Fletcher Jr., Gerald Horne, Kimberly Springer, Carole Boyce-Davies, Leith Mullings Charlene Mitchell, Eileen Boris, Frances Fox Piven, Genna-Rae McNeil. March 28. CUNY Graduate Center, New York City. Information and registration: blackwomen2009.org.

Economy Connection

■ War and global capitalism. Unemployment and recession. Wealth, poverty and inequality. For speakers and resources on these and related topics, contact Economy Connection, a project of the Union for Radical Political Economics. We can provide speakers for formal or informal events sponsored by community groups, unions, high schools, colleges or political organizations. Contact us at soapbox@comcast.net or (201) 792-7459. Join URPE! urpe.org, (413) 577-0806, urpe@labornet.org.

NEW YORK

Identity/Citizenship, Religion/Politics

■ The Center for Ethics at Yeshiva University presents the third annual Scholar-in-Residence Lectures, featuring Kwame Anthony Appiah, Princeton University. "Citizens of the World? Cosmopolitanism and the Ethics of Identity," Wednesday, March 11, 7:30 PM, Yeshiva University Museum, 15 West Sixteenth Street; "Religious Identity as a Challenge to Modern Politics," Thursday, March 12, 6 PM, Cardozo Law School, 55 Fifth Avenue (at Twelfth Street). Free. ASL interpretation and wheelchair access. RSVP: pcassidy@yu.edu or (212) 960-0189. More information: yu.edu/ethics.

The Green-Collar Economy

■ Puffin/*Nation* Creative Citizenship awardee and author-activist Van Jones will speak on "The Green-Collar Economy" in an author interview with Dr. Joe Chuman of the Ethical Cultural Society on Sunday, February 22, 7:30 PM, at The Puffin Foundation, 20 Puffin Way, Teaneck, NJ 07666. Free admission. puffinfoundation.org.

Beyond the Ballot: Making the Movement Matter

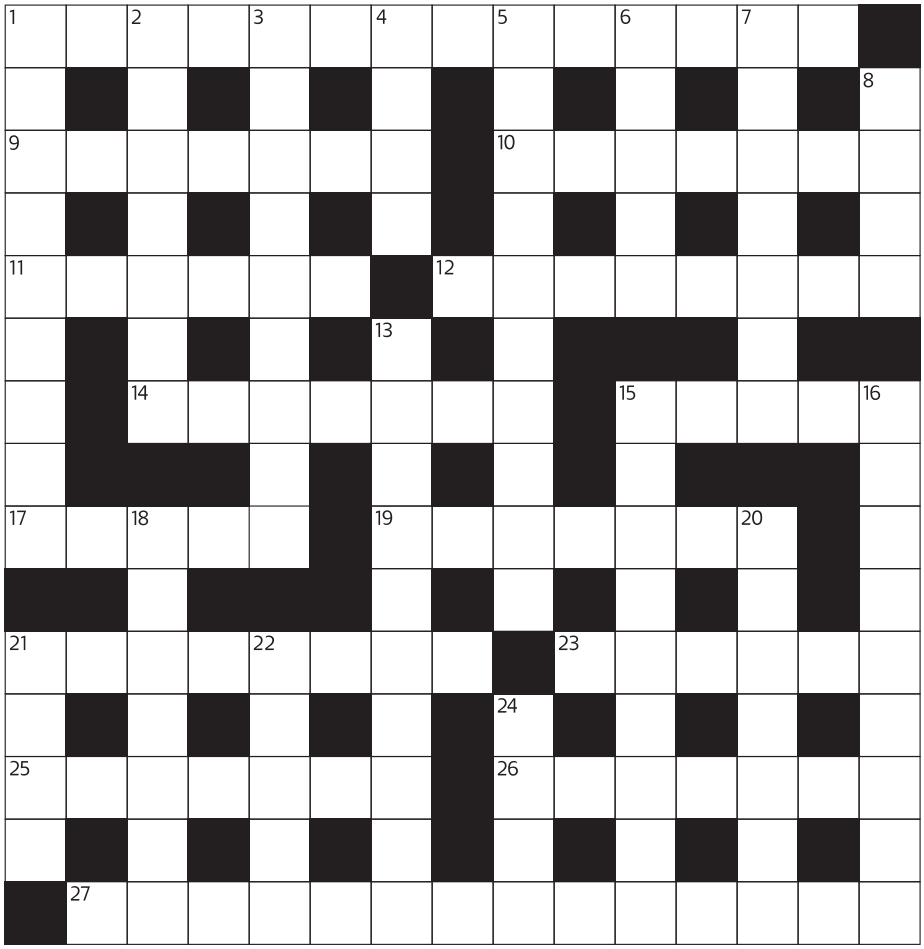
■ Join Amy Goodman, host of *Democracy Now!*, and *Nation* writers Liza Featherstone and Christian Parenti at a conference on movement building under President Obama. February 28. Sponsored by the Young Democratic Socialists. Academy of Environmental Science, 410 East 100th Street, New York City. To register, visit ydsusa.org, e-mail yds@dsausa.org or call (212) 727-8610.

The advertising deadline for Events is every Thursday. Rates: $210 for 50 words; $260 for 75 words, additional words (above 75) $2.00 each. To place an ad, call Amanda at (212) 209-5414.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Puzzle No. 3158

FRANK W. LEWIS



ACROSS

1 Perhaps the people who work for you—material workers, with stripes to show for it. (5,9)

9 The cop when not on duty still shows up the pre-hippie type. (3-4)

10 Will eating it make you indolent and self-indulgent? It makes Leo numb. (7)

11 Brewed broths—described by more than one end of 9. (6)

12 Quietly hurried, yet laid back for meals and such. (8)

14 Cuts the lass—she is disturbed by it! (7)

15 The short periodical is about to go—like one of the survivors of a race of giants. (5)

17 Famous—but not little Edward. (5)

19 What the plump lady perhaps does to the dress, or the man to the cat. (4,3)

21 They supposedly homeward fly, but a person sometimes does to his pride. (8)

23 Is this what makes an angry snake bite? One might hope so. (6)

25 One sees part of him past operating a paintbrush to achieve it. (7)

26 Frantic, a robin gets one in the capital. (7)

27 Casing the landscape—again, fool? No, I remove "h" from the circle. (14)

DOWN

1 and **21** If a storm pans out this way on the boat, we expect it to be good with the athletic types. (13)

2 Has enough money to pay for the little notices, very loud otherwise, inside. (7)

3 The distance between the water and the deck—but the meals are provided gratis! (9)

4 Food of the east prepared here? (4)

5 Showing unselfishness, crazy Yogi enters. (10)

6 Everybody covered, but awful tired! (3,2)

7 Packing by light strokes, and recording things around the morning. (7)

8 and **16** Thinking rather dreamily of a collection of yarns. (4-9)

13 Right from the horse's mouth, an article buried deep. (3,3-4)

15 What the revenuers sought at one time, but only at night? (9)

16 See 8

18 Hobo with the Paris-style put underfoot. (7)

20 A place where you get to stumble on oil production? (7)

21 See 1

22 The little girl in kilts has nothing to catch cows with! (5)

24 Atlantic hideout for one in opposition. (4)

AVAILABLE
from Nation Books!
A collection of
Frank W. Lewis
classics!!

SOLUTION TO PUZZLE NO. 3157

A	S	P	H	A	L	T	■	V	I	A	D	U	C	T
L	■	L	■	B	■	R	■	E	■	B	■	T	■	I
L	E	A	K	A	G	E	■	S	H	O	R	T	E	N
O	■	S	■	S	■	A	■	S	■	M	■	E	■	T
W	A	T	C	H	■	T	O	E	■	B	E	R	R	Y
E	■	I	■	■	■	E	■	L	■	■	■	E	■	P
D	E	C	A	Y	E	D	■	S	W	I	N	D	L	E
■	■	■	■	O	■	■	■	■	■	C	■	■	■	■
P	I	C	T	U	R	E	■	B	R	E	U	G	E	L
R	■	O	■	■	■	N	■	U	■	■	■	O	■	A
A	T	T	I	C	■	O	F	F	■	A	F	T	E	R
I	■	E	■	H	■	U	■	F	■	W	■	O	■	G
S	U	R	G	E	O	N	■	E	X	A	M	P	L	E
E	■	I	■	A	■	C	■	T	■	R	■	O	■	S
S	H	E	A	T	H	E	■	S	E	D	A	T	E	S

The Nation (ISSN 0027-8378) is published weekly (except for the second week in January, and biweekly the third week of July through the second week of September) by The Nation Company, L.P. © 2009 in the U.S.A. by The Nation Company, L.P., 33 Irving Place, New York, NY 10003. (212) 209-5400. Washington Bureau: Suite 308, 110 Maryland Avenue N.E., Washington, DC 20002. (202) 546-2239. Periodicals postage paid at New York, NY, and at additional mailing offices. Subscription orders, changes of address and all subscription inquiries: The Nation, PO Box 55149, Boulder, CO 80322-5149, or call 1-800-333-8536. Publications Mail Agreement No: 40041477. Return undeliverable Canadian addresses to Bleuchip International, PO Box 25542, London, ON N6C 6B2. Canada Post: Publications Mail Agreement No.: 40612608. When ordering a subscription, please allow 4-6 weeks for receipt of your first issue and for all subscription transactions. Basic annual subscription price: $52 for 47 issues. Back issues $6 prepaid ($8 foreign) from: The Nation, 33 Irving Place, New York, NY 10003. The Nation is available on microfilm from: University Microfilms, 300 North Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48106. Member, Audit Bureau of Circulations. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to The Nation, PO Box 55149, Boulder, CO 80322-5149. Printed in U.S.A. on recycled paper.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Free Shipping

• Lighted • Hands-Free • Huge •

The best invention for readers and crafters since the eye glasses!

2.5X-plus variable magnification, to easily cover an entire page
The ultra-flexible gooseneck positions the lens exactly where you need it
firstSTREET exclusive not available in stores
Twelve high-powered LEDs provide ample light for close work and reading
Glare-free viewing with no hot spots!

Our one-of-a-kind magnifying floor lamp combines powerful FULL-PAGE magnification with flexible adjustability and clear, even Balanced Spectrum light. Twelve high-powered LEDs provide ample light for close work and reading. The super-large lens provides 2.5X-plus variable magnification, to easily cover an entire page without glare or hot spots. The ultra-flexible gooseneck positions the lens exactly where you need it. And unlike that magnifier in the drawer, you'll always know where this one is.

Try one for yourself with our exclusive in-home trial. We are so sure that the Lighted Full Page Magnifier will change your life that we are making it easier than ever for you to try it for yourself. Call today and our helpful, knowledgeable product experts will be glad to answer any question you might have. This is a *first*Street exclusive and not available in stores. Magnifying lens dimensions are a whopping 7.375" x 10". AC operated. Why wait, call today!

Lighted Full Page Magnifier

Item # ZR-5588 $99.95

Please mention promotional code 37800.
For fastest service, call toll-free 24 hours a day.

1-888-854-8592

www.fullpagemag.com

We accept all major credit cards, or if you choose, you can pay by check over the phone. To order by mail, please call for details.

firstSTREET for Boomers and Beyond®

1998 Ruffin Mill Road
Colonial Heights, VA 23834

55881

All Rights Reserved © 2008 TechnoBrands, Inc.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

BOSE

Presenting the Acoustic Wave® music system II.

Our best one-piece music system.

When we introduced the original Acoustic Wave® music system, *Sound & Vision* said it delivered "possibly the best-reproduced sound many people have ever heard." And the *Oregonian* reported it had "changed the way many Americans listen to music."

Today, the improved Acoustic Wave® music system II builds on our more than 40 years of industry-leading innovation to deliver even better sound. This is the best one-piece music system we've ever made, with sound that rivals large and complicated stereos. There's no stack of equipment. No tangle of wires. Just all-in-one convenience and lifelike sound.

Shown in Graphite Gray with optional 5-CD Changer.

Even better sound than its award-winning predecessor. With recently developed Bose® technologies, our engineers were able to make the acclaimed sound even more natural. We believe you'll appreciate the quality even at volume levels approaching that of a live performance.

Use it where you like. This small system fits almost anywhere. You can move it from room to room, or take it outside. It has what you need to enjoy your music, including a built-in CD player and digital FM/AM tuner. You also can easily connect additional sources like your MP3 player or TV.

Hear it yourself risk free for 30 days. Use our Excitement Guarantee to try it for 30 days. Order now and receive the new Bose Connect Kit for iPod free – a $99 value. The kit makes it easy to play your iPod through the Acoustic Wave® music system II. It includes a remote that controls both the system and key iPod functions, and a dock that recharges your iPod. When you call, ask about making **12 easy payments,** with no interest charges from Bose.* Compare the performance with large, multi-component stereos costing much more. And discover why Bose is the most respected name in sound.

iPod not included.

To order or learn more:

1-800-314-3416, ext. G8428

www.Bose.com/AWMS2

Name_____

Address_____

City_____ State_____ Zip_____

Phone_____ E-mail (Optional) _____

Mail to: Bose Corp., Dept. DMG MS2T3, The Mountain, Framingham, MA 01701-9168

BOSE®
Better sound through research®

IN THE HOME • AROUND THE HOME • AWAY FROM HOME

*Bose payment plan available on orders of $299-$1500 paid by major credit card. Separate financing offers may be available for select products. See website for details. Down payment is 1/12 the product price plus applicable tax and shipping charges, charged when your order is shipped. Then, your credit card will be billed for 11 equal monthly installments beginning approximately one month from the date your order is shipped, with 0% APR and no interest charges from Bose. Credit card rules and interest may apply. U.S. residents only. Limit one active financing program per customer. ©2009 Bose Corporation. Patent rights issued and/or pending. The Acoustic Wave® music system II design is a registered trademark of Bose Corporation. Financing and Connect Kit offers not to be combined with other offers or applied to previous purchases, and subject to change without notice. Bose Connect Kit works with many iPods with a click wheel; call for details. If the Acoustic Wave® music system II is returned, the Connect Kit must be returned for a full refund. Offer is limited to purchases made from Bose and participating authorized dealers. Offer valid 2/1/09-3/31/09. iPod is a trademark of Apple Inc., registered in the U.S. and other countries. Quotes reprinted with permission: *Sound & Vision*, 3/85; Wayne Thompson, *Oregonian*, 9/10/96.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED